



*Aboriginal news from across Turtle Island and beyond*  
**February 5 – 12, 2016**

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# Aboriginal Arts & Culture

## WAG unveils indigenous exhibition



The Winnipeg Art Gallery's "We Are on Treaty Land" exhibition highlights indigenous art from the past 40 years.

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CTV Winnipeg

Published Saturday, February 6, 2016 5:05PM CST

The Winnipeg Art Gallery unveiled its newest exhibit Friday night.

The "We Are on Treaty Land" exhibit highlights paintings, prints and photographs from indigenous artists over the last 40 years.

The exhibit honours Winnipeg's location on traditional Treaty 1 and Métis territory and indicates a shift in perspective at the WAG.

"We've seen a lot of changes, there are a lot more changes that we need to in fact provide the ideal forum for the exhibition, the study, the dialogue with First Nations, Métis and Inuit."

The collection was assembled by the gallery's new curatorial resident of indigenous art, Jaimie Issac, from Sagkeeng First Nation.

**Direct Link:** <http://winnipeg.ctvnews.ca/wag-unveils-indigenous-exhibition-1.2767719>

## Aboriginal stories told through animation

**The Guardian Series shows how animation can share indigenous culture, language**

CBC News Posted: Feb 07, 2016 7:37 PM CT Last Updated: Feb 07, 2016 8:52 PM CT



Doug Cuthand, left, and Randy Morin were involved with a television series which uses animation to tell indigenous stories. (Eric Anderson/CBC)

When it comes to passing on indigenous stories, Doug Cuthand and Randy Morin say using stop-motion animation can tap into younger generations.

They stopped by the Saskatoon Public Library last week as part of Aboriginal Storytellers Month.

"I think the beauty of animation is you are really not limited by the physical world around you," said Cuthand, who is an independent film producer, writer and journalist.

"Younger people, they look to their imagination more. They are able to use their imagination and try to get, tell the stories through different ways."

Cuthand added that through animation, bringing in the special effects needed to tell many indigenous stories is much more affordable.

"I think animation does lend itself well to a lot of these traditional stories that may require special effects or special animals or creatures that talk, that kind of thing," he said.

Cuthand and Morin were involved in the *Guardians Evolution* series, a claymated series broadcast on APTN Kids. The show is in both Cree and English.

"[The kids] feel really proud to hear their language. A lot of them don't understand the language but with subtitles they can understand what's going on," Morin said.

"I think there needs to be more productions like this both in Cree and English, especially in Canada and with all the indigenous languages, because we are losing them really fast and it's a good way to retain them."

Morin provided many of the voices in the show, but he said they also scoured the province to find other Cree speakers. Some characters in the show are indigenous, but others are from Nordic countries and France.

"A lot of these people are coming from reserves who have never, ever acted and it was very hilarious to see them try to mimic the [different] dialects in Cree, like French Cree, so it's hilarious," he said with a laugh.

They added that television and animation is a global industry and there has been interest from broadcasters around the world in indigenous stories.

"The world is paying attention now," Cuthand said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/aboriginal-stories-told-through-animation-1.3437959>

## Aboriginal cultural centre proposed for Nanaimo's Beban Park

by [Tamara Cunningham - Nanaimo News Bulletin](#)  
posted Feb 7, 2016 at 5:00 PM

Aboriginals of all nations could have their first cultural space to gather – a colossal new centre proposed for Nanaimo's Beban Park.

The vision is to build the Indigenous Peoples Place of Culture, a 42,000-square-foot centre with licenced childcare, a youth centre, public school and cultural hall.

Its architects say there's nothing like it for the urban aboriginal community in Nanaimo. The hope is that it will rest in the heart of the city at Beban Park, offering all indigenous people a place to celebrate and share culture as well as help with the healing of residential schools.

The idea came from a council of elders, representing five different nations, which wanted to see a space where culture could happen on a regular basis, said Chris Beaton, executive director with the Nanaimo Aboriginal Centre and a partner in the project, adding programs and services currently operate in non-traditional settings like multi-purpose rooms and classrooms.

"Many of these elders are from reserves where access to a big house is a pretty normal way of life, a physical place where community can come together to celebrate, to mourn, to

share, to teach, to pass on stories, or song or dance or drum,” Beaton said. “We don’t have that opportunity. We don’t have that type of space in an urban environment.”

This is not a big house, which already exists in the Snuneymuxw First Nation territory, said Beaton. It is something different, open to the community and urban aboriginal people.

There would be nothing like it in B.C., said Beaton, who hopes to see it at Beban Park where there’s adequate parking, access to public transportation and close proximity to recreational facilities for about 100 children that would be at the centre on weekdays.

“It puts this building in the heart of the city,” he said. “It is an obvious and public demonstration that we have a rich aboriginal culture in this city and an aboriginal community in this city and we are part of the makeup of the city.”

The Parks and Recreation Commission has sought a staff report on whether the project fits within the new Beban Park Master Plan, but the concept has won early support in principle from the Culture and Heritage Commission. It’s unknown how much it will cost.

The Mid-Island Métis Nation and Boys and Girls Club of Central Vancouver Island are also partners in the project, which will be guided by community input and a council of elders and youths.

Sally Williams, chairwoman of the cultural centre’s elders council, likens the vision to the potlatch system, which provided a way of dealing with loss, trauma, the celebration of life and the coming of age.

She sees it as an opportunity for all aboriginal people to stand in unity, share values and knowledge and provide all generations the guidance they need. It’s also a ‘huge project’ needed to help with the healing of residential schools and other trauma.

“We are away from our communities. Some of us have never returned home from residential school, some of us have lost our communities, some of us don’t know where we came from because of residential school,” said Williams.

“Residential school caused many of our people to feel abandoned and not have a place, and the [cultural building] will give them a place to be accepted and recognized for what they have to offer,” she said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.nanaimobulletin.com/news/367867311.html>

## **Terrace Art Gallery shows work of students from Freda Diesing School**

## North By Northwest's Sheryl MacKay spoke with two artists, Jamie Nole and Danika Naccarella

By North By Northwest, [CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 07, 2016 6:11 PM PT Last Updated: Feb 07, 2016 6:19 PM PT



Jamie Nole's painting of a kermode bear and a black bear. Nole says she chose to paint the black bear because they are a traditional food source for Tahltan and Nisga'a nations, and the kermode because they live in her nations' traditional territory. (Terrace Art Gallery)

From Haida bentwood boxes to intricate and delicate weavings, the students at the **Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art** are learning and preserving traditional First Nations art in its many forms.

A student art exhibit is on display for the month of February at the **Terrace Art Gallery**.



Jamie Nole's Thank You Father pays tribute to her own father. (Terrace Art Gallery)

For two young artists, it's an exciting time.

Jamie Nole, a member of the Frog clan and from the Tahltan and Nisga'a Nations, has several paintings on wood and paper in the exhibit. Nole said art helped her deal with trauma in her life.



"Making art definitely helps make me feel better," she told CBC Radio's *North By Northwest* host Sheryl MacKay.

"I think of it more as healing. I'm able to get all the emotions I hold in."

One of the works Nole has at the Terrace Art Gallery is called *Thank You Father*, which depicts a frog riding on the back of a wolf.

Nole's father was a member of the Wolf clan, and supported her as a single father for the last years of his life.

## Bringing back tradition

Another artist, Danika Naccarella, is from the Nuxalk First Nation and has five paintings and bentwood box renditions in the gallery.



Danika Naccarella's acrylic on wood painting Killer Whale Mother. (Terrace Art Gallery)

Naccarella said she learned a lot by studying traditional art methods.

"It's a really great learning experience, just to copy a box design," she said. "I love to study, just studying pieces, looking at the flow of the form line. You never really understand it until you do it yourself."

"It's a challenge, and I enjoy it."

Naccarella grew up in Vancouver, but said moving to Bella Coola, B.C. and attending the Freda Diesing School helped her reconnect with her culture through songs, dances, even potlatch ceremonies.

"One thing I want to do is help bring back traditions with the art by creating pieces ... to bring them back out," she said.



A bentwood box rendition by Danika Naccarella. A rendition is a reproduction made by students of an old master's work as part of the learning process. (Terrace Art Gallery)

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/first-nations-art-terrace-1.3437333>

## *Nanook* and Robert Flaherty: Father of Documentary Film – and More

- *Kelli Marshall*
- *February 8, 2016*



*Robert Flaherty and Alice Nevalinga (aka Nyla, the smiling one) were romantically involved – or as McLane modestly puts it, “he had an Eskimo female companion.”*

\* \* \*



In 1922, Robert Flaherty made the first-feature length documentary, *Nanook of the North*. Because of this, he is generally considered the father of documentary film. But as we'll see, Mr. Flaherty fathered more than that.

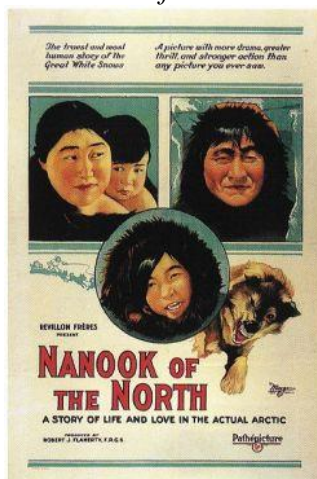


Robert J. Flaherty. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

From Michigan, Robert Flaherty was a still photographer who loved the North American wilderness and the people who inhabited it, in particular American Indians and Eskimos (as they were called at the time). In 1913, Flaherty's wife, Frances, encouraged her husband to trade his still photography kit for motion-picture equipment. Obliging, he registered for one of Eastman Kodak's camera operation courses in New York, and was on his way to becoming a filmmaker.

Flaherty's first attempt at creating a motion picture would take him to the Hudson Bay region of Canada (Inukjuak) to live with the Eskimos, now more commonly known as the Inuit. Between 1913 and 1914, Flaherty shot hours of footage of the Inuit, their activities and surroundings. While editing the film back in Toronto, he accidentally dropped a cigarette onto the floor, igniting the pile of highly flammable cellulose (see Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* for a more entertaining account of fiery film). The original negative footage was almost completely destroyed, and the accident nearly took down Flaherty as well.

Undaunted, Robert and Frances did not give up their filmmaking ventures. They returned to the northern region of Canada, and between 1920 and 1922, they shot what we know as *Nanook of the North*.



As any film instructor, documentary director, or the creators of IFC's mockumentary series, *Documentary Now!*, will likely tell you, *Nanook of the North* is a major feat. First, the ethnographic documentary chronicles the daily lives of Inuit culture, focusing on relatable themes like family (with conventional gender roles), survival, travel, and play. To do this, again, the Flahertys embedded themselves within Inuit life for nearly two years.

Second, imagine the determination, ingenuity, and improvisation it must have taken to shoot *Nanook of the North*. In *A New History of Documentary Film*, Betsy A. McLane discusses the specifics of Flaherty's equipment: a 60-pound, hand-cranked camera along with a 15-pound tripod and massive quantities of 35mm film, all of which Flaherty and his crew would have had to lug across snow, ice floes, and frozen banks.

Finally, Flaherty developed and printed film on-location so he could be sure what he was filming was reputable. To do this, McLane reports, the indigenous people cut holes in the ice to get water for processing the film, carried it in barrels back to their huts, and strained out any animal hair that fell into it from their clothes. Flaherty's "printer" in the field, involving a blacked-out window, was apparently even more makeshift.



"Nyla"

*Nanook of the North* is also notorious because of some "faking and fudging" within, as Dean W. Duncan calls it. Perhaps the most repeated bits are these:

- The family featured is not a family at all. They were cast in the roles.
- Nanook's actual name is Allakariallak.
- Nyla, whom Flaherty subtitles "the smiling one," is not Nanook's wife, and her name is Alice.
- At this time, the Inuit would have hunted walruses and the like with rifles, not (the more romanticized) harpoons.
- The culture had mostly embraced Western attire by this point, so the clothes featured in the film are an odd hybrid.
- The seal "Nanook" fights onscreen is actually dead.



"Nanook"

These are the fabrications and re-enactments I usually relay to my students – *after* we've considered *Nanook of the North*'s contribution to the history of documentary cinema.

And then I lay this one on them:

*You know Nyla, the smiling one? Well, she and Robert Flaherty were more than subject and director.*

That's right. Robert Flaherty and Alice Nevalinga (aka Nyla, the smiling one) were romantically involved – or as McLane modestly puts it, "he had an Eskimo female companion." What's more, Flaherty and Alice had a son, Joseph (or Josephie). McLane reports Flaherty "neither saw [the child] nor acknowledged [him] to the public on his sub-arctic expeditions."

In his exhaustive study on the Flahertys, Robert Christopher delves further into the matter. He explains that little Joseph was "absorbed into the embrace of Eskimo adoptive culture." But significantly, before the process was complete, Alice insisted her son's name *not* be changed to an Inuit name, that he remain Joseph Flaherty. Almost gleefully, Christopher writes that Joseph, in turn, fathered a family – and if you were to visit Inukjuak and Grise Fiord (now in the First Nations territory of Nunavut), "you will meet a large and thriving Flaherty Inuit clan."

As it turns out, Alice was not Robert Flaherty's only female companion. In 1915, during his and Frances' voyages to Canada's Belcher Islands, he also fathered a son with an Inuk woman. This relationship is confirmed in Claude Massot's 1998 documentary *Nanook Revisited*, included as a bonus on Flicker Alley's lavish Blu-ray of *Nanook of the North*.

I should note that marital customs among the Inuit were not strictly monogamous.

According to *Inuit Women: Their Powerful Spirit in a Century of Change*, spousal exchange, polygamy, and polyandry were common, but "practices seldom taken lightly." Spousal exchange, for example, occurred on a temporary basis – a few days to a few weeks – and required consent from all partners.

Lest we forget, Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* is a documentary created for and presented to the Western world, which maintains traditional ideas about gender roles, marriage, and sex. As such, that the film omits the Inuits' looser romantic and sexual customs makes sense – even if its director was, it seems, fully embracing them.

#### *Works Cited*

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McLane, Betsy A. *A New History of Documentary Film*. 2nd ed. New York: Continuum, 2012. Print.

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*Note:* Unless otherwise indicated, all above images are screenshots from the film.

**Direct Link:** <http://brightlightsfilm.com/robert-flaherty-nanook-1922-nyla-child-father-of-documentary-film-and-more/#.Vru09BgrJkg>

## Nunavut's translators gather to talk standards, terminology

"These people play an extremely important role in Nunavut"

STEVE DUCHARME, February 09, 2016 - 1:07 pm



Jeela Padluq-Cloutier, executive director of Nunavut's language authority — Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit — speaks to participants of an interpreter-translator conference in Iqaluit Feb. 8 as emcee of the event. The conference, which continues until Feb. 12., is the first of its kind since the creation of Nunavut. (PHOTO BY STEVE DUCHARME)



Dozens of interpreters and translators, from around Nunavut, are gathering in Iqaluit this week to talk about standardizing Inuktitut and other issues related to their field. (PHOTO BY STEVE DUCHARME)

Edna Elias, former Nunavut Commissioner and now a freelance translator, worries that the interpreter-translator students sitting across the table from her won't have the support they need to be successful when they graduate.

Elias, along with dozens of other interpreters and translators from around Nunavut, is attending an interpreter-translator conference in Iqaluit this week, where there's a lot to talk about.

Among the concerns: Inconsistent Inuktitut terminologies and no available co-op work experience programs catch many new graduates flat-footed when they enter the workforce, Elias, who operates a translation business and teaches courses at Nunavut Arctic College in Kugluktuk, told *Nunatsiaq News* Feb. 8.

"They do practicums, but they don't do this stuff," she said, nodding towards the translator booth tucked away in the corner of the Frobisher Inn's conference hall.

"They don't practice in that booth, doing simultaneous translation in a public meeting, or the transliteration of something. It's a totally different skill set once you become the mouthpiece."

Nunavut's army of interpreters, who keep the territory's political system functioning on a daily basis, gathered this week at the invitation of the territory's language authority, Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit.

The goal, over the course of the conference, which continues until Feb. 12, will be to draft a series of recommendations for the future of the profession.

Dubbed Apqutauvugut, or "we the path," the conference will gather input from the translation community on the feasibility of a unified writing system for Inuktitut.

According to the agenda, delegates also intend to review the specific needs of interpreter-translators, such as the possibility of codified terminology, training, ethics and centralized governance.

"Translators are extremely important. The means to communicate from one language to another — these people play an extremely important role in Nunavut," said IUT executive director and Apqutauvugut emcee Jeela Palluq-Cloutier.

Palluq-Cloutier took over as IUT director last November when the language authority's well-documented failed mandate brought about an internal shakeup and scrutiny from Nunavut's legislative assembly.

"We thought it was high-time to get these people together to talk about their issues, what they deal with, we've tried to make sure that through the week, we deal with each of these issues," she continued.

Apqutauvugut is the first interpreter-translator conference of its kind since the formation of Nunavut — the last one was held in 1998.

“It’s hard to [translate] social issues, because you don’t want to make any mistakes when describing them,” one interpreter said when the floor was opened to the audience for comments.

“Sometimes we make a lot of mistakes for terms. Sometimes we’re under so much pressure we don’t realize we made mistakes. The key words need to be added [in the terminology].”

The former Nunavut MLA for Amittuq, Louis Tapardjuk, delivered the first day’s keynote speech, recognizing the challenges many interpreters face in their duties to deliver precise language.

“[It’s supposed to be] Inuit only by 2020, the GN will be able to communicate and use Inuktitut by 2020, so we have a lot of work to do,” he said.

“They [Qallunaat] wanted to operate our territory, our government, and you run into problems because of that.”

Along with participating in workshops and lectures dealing with the conference’s mandate, Apqutavugut attendees will also hear from several Inuktitut language leaders in the course of the conference.

Nunavut’s language commissioner, Sandra Inutiq, and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. vice president James Eetoolook are scheduled to speak at the conference later this week.

Nunavut’s Minister of Languages George Kuksuk is also set to address the conference Feb. 9.

At the end of the week, organizers will collect participants’ input and then draft a series of recommendations sponsored by the IUT.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavuts\\_translators\\_gather\\_to\\_talk\\_standards\\_terminology/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavuts_translators_gather_to_talk_standards_terminology/)

## **Aboriginal storytellers to teach and entertain district students**

KAMSACK TIMES  
FEBRUARY 9, 2016 01:18 PM





Bear Paws is a 10-year-old boy, a 'little giant' who likes to spend time with his brother Rabbit, playing jokes on people and animals. However, these pranks usually backfire and the brothers often learn their lessons the hard way. Bear Paws has already reached the height of a full-grown male and claims to have the strength of 10 Grizzly bears. However, Bear Paws is naïve and has the gullibility to match. Thankfully, he also uses his gifts and tricks for the good of the people.

Two Aboriginal storytellers who were in the area's schools last year are returning to the district in February, which is Saskatchewan Aboriginal Storytelling Month. Also visiting students as a project of the literacy hub of Parkland Regional Library are Rabbit and Bear Paws, puppets from a series of *Rabbit and Bear Paws* graphic novels.

Carol Daniels will be in the Canora Junior Elementary School during the afternoon of February 2, while she and her husband Lyle will be at Yorkton and at the Canora Composite School on February 3. The *Rabbit and Bear Paws* presentation will be at Kamsack Comprehensive Institute on February 4 and at Chief Gabriel Cote Educaiton Complex on February 5.

For Aboriginal people, storytelling is both a gift, and a very old custom, sanctioned by the people, said information from Carol Marriott of Kamsack, a literacy co-ordinator for the Parkland Regional Library. "It has a place, and it has those who are recognized by the community as translators of this custom.

"In Aboriginal storytelling there is a difference between stories used more for entertainment and those that are more focused on the teachings of culture, ceremonies, and spirituality.

Carol Daniels is an Aboriginal artist, multi-disciplined in the areas of writing, storytelling, singing and drumming and visual art, the information said. Her latest project is to celebrate the release of her first novel of fiction, entitled *Bearskin Diary*.

On a regular basis, she enjoys performing at schools, community centres and children's festivals across the province, it said. She is a published poet, short story writer and playwright.

As a visual artist, her work has been exhibited in art galleries across Saskatchewan and Northern Canada. As a musician, a CD of women's drum songs, on which Carol was featured, was recently nominated for a Prairie Music Award.

Daniels is Cree and Chipewyan with roots in Sandy Bay. However, before pursuing her art on a full-time basis, she worked as a journalist for more than 30 years, working in television and radio at APTN, CTV and CBC.

Lyle Daniels was born in Regina and is a member of the Kawacatoose First Nation. He lived in the inner city of Regina that was a haven for at risk youth. He survived his teenage years by participating in sport as a means of keeping him in school.

A trained facilitator, Lyle was hired to deliver the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Program (ACAP) with the First Nations University of Canada. He has been active in providing training in Aboriginal leadership and Aboriginal awareness, and has worked with groups like Rawlco Radio, the University of Saskatchewan, the Saskatoon Police Service, Farm Credit Canada, the Office of the Treaty Commissioner and many others.

Currently, Lyle holds the position with the Saskatchewan Building Trades Council as the Labour Force Development Strategist, assisting with under-represented groups to gain employment into the building and construction trade unions.

***Rabbit and Bear Paws*** is for the young and the young at heart, says information on their website. This series is set in 1750s colonized North America and features the comical adventures of two brothers, Rabbit and Bear Paws.

Using traditional Native teachings and humour, the stories are based on *The Seven Fires Prophecies* and *The Seven Grandfathers*.

The characters are mischievous and the audience learns enjoyable life lessons from their numerous pranks and mistakes while also appreciating the unity of the Native communities and how they related to one another peacefully, the information said.

Rabbit and Bear Paws are heroes that were created by **Christopher Meyer, Tanya Leary and Chad Solomon** to share humorous adventures based on traditional teachings.

“This allows us to carry on the teachings to the youth who wish to explore their roots, while helping to share the wisdom of the Aboriginal community with the universal audience (non-aboriginal), the information said. The Anishinabek were the middle-men of the Fur trading era. So the Anishinabek would have traveled and traded with other Nations the same goods that they traded with the French and the English.

“The idea is to have the family – Rabbit, Bear Paws, Clover Blossom and Grey Stone, visit other communities sharing with our audiences how Native peoples worked out their differences peacefully when challenges arose. At the same time the stories show how we all learn from each other and that we need to help each other out, including the new neighbours (Europeans).

“All the characters are based on traditional teachings, it said. Rabbit is based on the ideas from *The Seven Fires Prophecies*. He is to be the little boy who helps to guide us to the path the ancestors have made for us, while Bear Paws is based on stories that describe Naniboozhoo and the many adventures that were created around this person.

“We use *The Seven Grandfathers* to help create all age stories that reflect a positive message that is needed for all the people of the medicine wheel. The main characters were brothers, so the adventures would be around social experiences and everyday life events that would happen in the 18th century that are as important today as they were yesterday.”

**Christopher Meyer** is a co-writer of the graphic novel series. **Tanya Leary** is Salteaux First Nation from Roseau River, Man. She is an author, an artist, a mother, an outdoor adventurer and life-long learner and is dedicated to promoting First Nations culture in education. **Chad Solomon, who will be conducting the puppet show at Kamsack and Cote**, is a member of the Henvey Inlet, First Nation. His grandfather Art Solomon, a traditional healer and justice activist, would spend his time building wooden toys and playing with Chad and his siblings. He learned from his grandfather that no matter how old one becomes, one should always be young-at-heart and that laughter is the greatest medicine. This is the spirit behind the comical adventures of the *Rabbit and Bear Paws* series.

- See more at: <http://www.kamsacktimes.com/news/local-news/aboriginal-storytellers-to-teach-and-entertain-district-students-1.2168231#sthash.cBYQ9xXL.dpuf>

## Montreal students flock to Inuit tattoo documentary

Film from 2010 pulls in its largest-ever live audience

SPECIAL TO NUNATSIAQ NEWS, February 10, 2016 - 8:45 am



Alethea Arnaquq-Baril showed her film *Tunniit: Retracing the Lines of Inuit Tattoos* inside a 700-seat venue at Montreal's Concordia University on Feb. 8. (PHOTO BY DAVID MURPHY)



Alethea Arnaquq-Baril said she's reluctant to show her film to a wider audience because she fears cultural appropriation, but also said her Feb. 8 Concordia audience provided a "safe environment." (PHOTO BY DAVID MURPHY)

## DAVID MURPHY

MONTREAL — Iqaluit's Alethea Arnaquq-Baril steps onto the stage at the Alumni Auditorium of Montreal's Concordia University and gasps into the microphone: "ho-ly!"

It was hard finding a seat Feb. 8 at the 700-seat Montreal venue for the screening of Arnaquq-Baril's 2010 documentary, *Tunniit: Retracing the Lines of Inuit Tattoos*, about her quest to re-discover the traditional practice of Inuit facial tattooing.

Arnaquq-Baril's film kicked off a new program of Indigenous films screened across Canada called "First Peoples First Screens," mounted by the non-profit Montreal-based political film network, Cinema Politica.

But Arnaquq-Baril confessed that a large non-Indigenous audience, like the one she faced Feb. 8, isn't exactly her target audience for the documentary — for fear of cultural appropriation.

The documentary has mostly been screened to Inuit or Aboriginal people.

"I was afraid that if I put out this film to a wider audience that we could end up with more non-Inuit with traditional Inuit tattoos than actual Inuit with Inuit tattoos, and that's why I hesitated," Arnaquq-Baril told the audience before the screening.

But she credited Cinema Politica's "safe environment," which allowed her film to be seen in context, and where she said tradition is celebrated.

In *Tunniit*, Arnaquq-Baril interviews elders across Nunavut with the help of Aaju Peter and the film ends with the two getting their own traditional face tattoos.

While the documentary is about tattoos, that's not the only message to take away, she told *Nunatsiaq News*.

There's a message for the southern Canadians audience as well.

"It wasn't just about the tattoos. It was giving a bit of a history on why it disappeared and the role that Canadians have played in that.

"That southern Canadians of European heritage didn't have a passive role in the destruction of our culture. It was a very active [role]," she said.

Many southern Canadians think of the loss of Inuit culture as happening hundreds of years ago, Arnaquq-Baril said.

"This film made it very apparent how recent it really is and that it is the people that are alive today that have affected us and continue to affect us so — that's something I hope they take away from this film," she said.

This was the largest ever screening of her documentary, Arnaquq-Baril said.

And screening her documentary in Quebec is a "perfect response" to the 2015 controversial film about Inuit called *Of the North*, she said.

Arnaquq-Baril has alleged that the film, by Dominic Gagnon, is racist and depicts Inuit in a poor light.

A professor who teaches Inuit studies at Concordia, Carol Rowan, said Gagnon's film has been shown in Concordia classes. Gagnon has spoken about the movie at the university as well.

"I think what's really important is that Alethea, as an Inuk filmmaker, has a place. And it's not very easy for Inuit filmmakers to get the funding they need to be able to live a life off of filmmaking," Rowan said.

"[So] it's pretty disgusting how a guy like Dominic Gagnon can actually have his film posted on Société de développement des entreprises culturelles and promoted by SODEC, it's really unacceptable.

But the positives of Inuit culture were certainly on display at the Feb. 8 screening.

Jenna Amarualik, who used to live in Igloolik but now lives in Laval, dressed in a red and white amauti and brought her baby to the screening.

She said the film had a great lesson for Inuit.

"It's really good to learn more [about Inuit tattoos] because my grandmother didn't teach me that. She was not around when that was popular," Amarualik said.

Another Inuk in the audience, Ujarak Appadoo, grew up in Arviat but now attends McGill University in Montreal. This was her second time seeing the film.

“It’s important for everyone — for non-Indigenous but also Indigenous or Inuit that hadn’t necessarily known about these practices — to see that this tradition is trying to be kept alive and it was a real thing,” Appadoo said.

Arnaquq-Baril is now finishing another documentary called *Angry Inuk* about how Inuit have been affected by the anti-sealing campaigns by animal rights groups

She also told the audience she’s in the process of getting *Tunniit* distributed on DVD soon.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674montreal\\_students\\_flock\\_to\\_inuit\\_tattoo\\_documentary/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674montreal_students_flock_to_inuit_tattoo_documentary/)

## **Nunavut celebrates Inuktut, Inuit culture this month**

**Inuit clothing the focus of month-long celebration, Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq**

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, February 10, 2016 - 7:00 am



In 2016, the theme of Nunavut's Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq month-long celebration of Inuktut is Inuit Annuraqausingit, or Inuit clothing. (IMAGE COURTESY OF THE GN)

A new name and a longer celebration: that’s what Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq, Nunavut’s annual celebration of Inuktut and Inuit culture, is bringing to Nunavut for the month of February.

Nunavut’s celebration of Inuktut, was first called Inuktitut Uqauttin or “speaking in the Inuit way” (in the Igloolik dialect), and lasted for only a week.

Uqauttin, the traditional plural form of uqausiq (“word,” “language”), still used in Greenlandic (spelled as oqaatsit), in Inupiaq and Inuvialuktun (uqauchit/uqautit), and in other western dialects of Inuktut, was commonly used by previous generations in the



eastern Arctic, but it is not used very much now, according to the Government of Nunavut.

So, after consulting with communities across Nunavut about the name, the name changed in 2005 to Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq, which means “celebration of our language.”

The 2016 celebration also brings a special theme to Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq — Inuit Annuraqausingit, or Inuit clothing.

“This theme celebrates our rich and artistic heritage,” said Nunavut’s minister of Languages George Kuksuk. “I invite all Nunavummiut to take time to celebrate and learn more about the innovation of Inuit clothing and design, and its related terminology throughout February.”

As part of this year’s celebration, the GN’s Department of Culture and Heritage will release recordings of the 2015 winners of Qilaut, Nunavut’s annual Inuktut music contest.

The winning songs will be available online and as a CD.

Boxes of Inuktut resources will also be delivered to every school, daycare and library in Nunavut, the GN said in a recent release about Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq.

The boxes include books, flash cards, posters and information about the 2016 theme.

You can also find activities online here on the GN’s website devoted to the 2016 Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq month.

This week, language is also the focus of the Apqutauvugut, or “we the path,” conference in Iqaluit, which is gathering input from the translators and interpreters on the feasibility of a unified writing system for Inuktut.

The conference delegates also intend to review the specific needs of interpreter-translators, such as the possibility of codified terminology, training, ethics and centralized governance.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavut\\_celebrates\\_inuktut\\_inuit\\_culture\\_during\\_february/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavut_celebrates_inuktut_inuit_culture_during_february/)

## **Inuktut translators vote to adopt unified roman orthography system**

**‘We were caught off-guard,’ says Sarah Leonardis**

CBC News Posted: Feb 11, 2016 4:01 AM CT Last Updated: Feb 11, 2016 2:34 PM CT



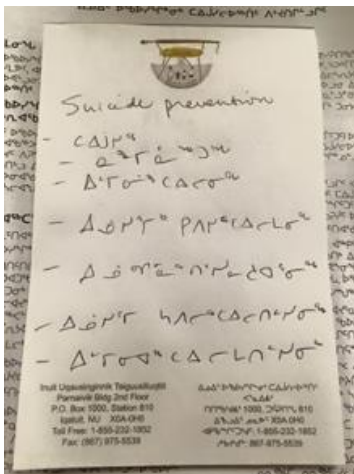
Dozens of translators and interpreters from all over Canada have come together in Iqaluit for Apqutauvugut, a conference to discuss standards and terminology for Inuktitut languages. (Jordan Konek/CBC)

Inuktitut language interpreters and translators from across the country have voted to adopt a unified roman orthography system in hopes of saving and modernizing their language.

"We were caught off-guard," said Sarah Leonardis, a translator who also works with CBC North.

"We expected the vote to be a 'no' so it was a shock," added Leonardis, who explained that conference delegates voted 44 to 39 to adopt a unified roman orthography system.

Dozens of translators and interpreters from all over Canada have come together in Iqaluit for Apqutauvugut, a conference to discuss standards and terminology for the Inuktitut language. The conference is hosted by the territory's language authority, Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, Nunavut's department of Culture and Heritage and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.



Interpreters/translators debated how best to say 'suicide prevention' in Inuktitut. Iglaaq host Madeleine Allakariallak noted several variations using syllabics. (Madeleine Allakariallak/CBC)

The goal of the conference, which wraps up Feb. 12, is to create a series of recommendations that will guide the future of the profession.

Conference delegates are also working to standardize some words, and invent others.

A highlight at the conference was the vote on the future of written Inuktitut.

This week's gathering follows a language summit that took place in Iqaluit this past August. That's where a task force, launched by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, **recommended exploring the use of roman orthography** (the alphabet used by European languages) instead of syllabics — distinct characters originally imported by missionaries who had developed them for the Cree.

It's widely believed the move could make the language easier to learn and use.

Piita Irniq, Nunavut's former commissioner, raised a concern about the lack of officials representing Inuit organizations and the various governmental departments at this week's meeting.

He said as the people responsible for the livelihood of Inuktitut, these officials should be at the table.

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### Clarifications

- An earlier headline on this story said "Inuit translators vote to leave syllabics behind." In fact, translators voted to move ahead with a unified writing system for Inuktitut in Roman orthography.

Feb 11, 2016 2:29 PM CT

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/inuktitut-roman-orthography-vote-1.3442676>

## **U of S Aboriginal Arts Festival showcases local indigenous art, clothing and entertainment**

**The festival is part of Aboriginal Achievement Week**

CBC News Posted: Feb 11, 2016 6:14 AM CT Last Updated: Feb 11, 2016 6:14 AM CT

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Vendors sold local indigenous art, clothing and beadwork. (Chanss Lagaden/CBC)

Painted canvases, beaded jewellery, and the sounds of poetry filled the pub at the University of Saskatchewan Wednesday showcasing the talent of indigenous students and local artisans.

For the fifth year, the Aboriginal Arts Festival brought out vendors selling local indigenous art, clothing, and beadwork.

"It's an evening for the collective of indigenous students on campus to gather, to take in some acts, spoken word poetry, some singing, as well as vendors here who are showing off their art, their jewellery and their wares," organizer and U of S student Xavier Fisher said.

There was also a fashion show where clothing from local indigenous designers took to the stage.

The festival is part of Aboriginal Achievement Week on campus.

"The general importance of this week really is to showcase who we are," Fisher said. "

"To show that we are just not here to learn but also to display what we have to offer, not only to the non-indigenous community, but to show our fellow indigenous students that we can have a place on campus that allows for us to express ourselves."

Fisher said each year the festival gets bigger and better.

"It's strong and will continue on just like we are," he said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/u-of-s-aboriginal-arts-festival-1.3443296>

# Music journalist Kevin Howes gets Grammy nod for historical album of aboriginal music

**Brings attention to a forgotten chapter in Canadian music history**

The Canadian Press Posted: Feb 11, 2016 4:26 PM ET Last Updated: Feb 11, 2016 5:30 PM ET



Mohawk/Algonquin musician Willy Mitchell and album producer Kevin Howes. (Kevin Howes)

Music journalist/historian Kevin Howes has been driving across Canada for the past 15 years or so in search of obscure vinyl records of the 1950s to 1980s.

Equipped with a flashlight, face mask and old compact car, the 41-year-old DJ from Richmond Hill, Ont., has scoured everything from flea markets to dusty barns in Hutterite communities and an abandoned hair salon — all in the name of highlighting important fringe artists and learning about Canada's history.

His tireless work has resulted in his first Grammy Award nomination for best historical album for *Native North America (Vol. 1): Aboriginal Folk, Rock, and Country 1966-1985*. He's nominated as the compilation producer alongside Greg Mindorff, the mastering engineer.



Archival image of Willy Mitchell, one of the artists on Native North America Vol. 1. (Courtesy of the artist)

Howes said he's thrilled the Grammys are giving the artists a moment to finally shine, noting such a category doesn't exist at the Juno Awards in Canada.

"The Canadian music business is a little bit behind the times, I feel, unfortunately, in that capacity," said Howes.

"I hope that things like this can help to raise awareness because there's more than enough Canadian music that's brought back every year through reissues by companies around the world."

The nominated album has 34 newly remastered recordings — from Arctic garage rock of the Nunavik region of northern Quebec, to Yup'ik folk from Alaska and country blues from the Wagmatcook First Nation reserve in Nova Scotia.

The 23 different artists and groups represent a variety of First Nations, Metis and Inuit. They include Willie Dunn, Willie Thrasher, John Angaiak and Lloyd Cheechoo.





The cover of "Native North America (Vol. 1): Aboriginal Folk, Rock, And Country 1966-1985," by Canadian music journalist/historian Kevin Howes is shown in a handout photo. (THE CANADIAN PRESS/HO)

"These artists were fairly marginalized outside of their native communities where they were celebrated," said Howes.

"So I started reaching out to the artists, first and foremost to thank them for their music, which had affected me deeply, and then to ask for context: 'How were these records made? Tell me more about your life.'"

The project, which also has deluxe sets with archival photos, is intended to bridge generations, cultures and "eras of technology from the analogue into the digital age."

"The vinyl records themselves were pressed in such small numbers, they're literally extinct today and could be lost forever," said Howes.

"People have thrown them in the garbage and disposed of them over the years, or they have a lot of scratches and what have you. So we wanted to digitize them and preserve them for future generations so they can know a little bit about what was going on in those days."

Howes also wanted to let listeners know that some of these artists are still alive and very active in music. And his efforts worked.

Since the album came out a year ago, some of the artists have received concert bookings and been on CBC Radio's *q* program.

The album has also been profiled in Rolling Stone magazine, Mojo magazine and the Guardian newspaper.

"But it's been more of a struggle in Canada and unfortunately the Juno Awards do not have a category that can recognize such talent," said Howes.

## **Juno Awards do not have a similar category**

Howes said when he discusses the issue with people in the industry, they posit that there aren't enough projects to merit such an award here.

And yet at this year's Grammys, there's also another historical album with Canadians behind it.

*The Basement Tapes Complete: The Bootleg Series Vol. 11*, featuring music of Bob Dylan and Toronto's the Band, was co-produced by Jan Haust and co-engineered by Peter Moore, both of Toronto.

Howes said he'd like to collaborate with the Junos, the CBC and Library and Archives Canada to help preserve material that "people in future generations should know about."

"If the stories aren't documented, if the music isn't digitized, it could be lost forever and I think that would be a crime."

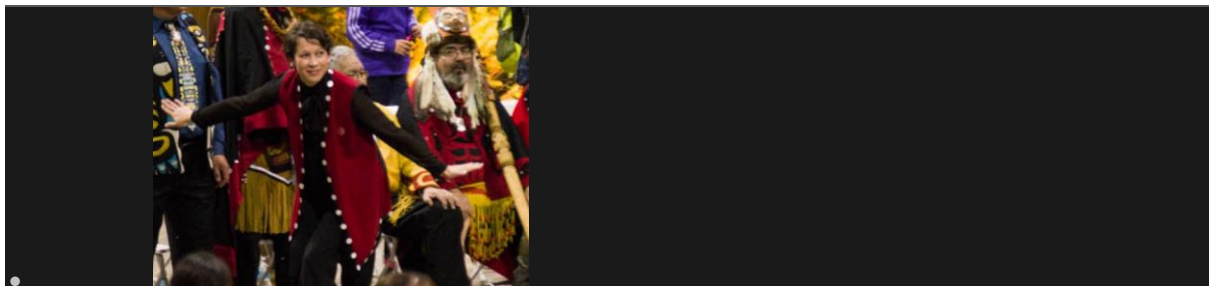
**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/arts/canada-aboriginal-music-grammy-nomination-historical-1.3444431>

## **First Nations ring in lunar new year with Hobiye celebration**

**More than 500 singers and dancers participated in Nisga'a Hobiye celebration**

By Wawmeesh G. Hamilton, CBC News Posted: Feb 10, 2016 7:00 PM ET Last Updated: Feb 10, 2016 8:30 PM ET

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Newly elected B.C. MLA Melanie Mark, who is Nisga'a, dances with the Kwhlii Gibaygum dance group on Feb. 5, in Vancouver, at a celebration marking the new year for the Nisga'a people. (Wawmeesh G. Hamilton)

The beats of drums and sounds of traditional songs echoed in Vancouver as First Nations celebrated Hobiye. More than 7,000 people filled the PNE on the weekend, to take part in the annual event.

The celebration marks the new year for the Nisga'a people, and coincides with the waxing of the crescent moon in February.

Hobiye stems from the Nisga'a word Hoobixis-hee, which refers to the bowl end of a wooden spoon.

According to the Nisga'a Nation website, if the moon is crescent shaped then this signifies a bountiful coming harvest for the Nisga'a people. If the crescent of the moon is closed, then it foreshadows a poor harvest.

First Nations groups participating in the event included the Git Hayetsk, Kwhlii Gibaygum and Iswalh dance groups.



Bill McCoy performs with the Git Hayetsk at Nisga'a Hobiye celebration.

Approximately 500 singers and dancers from eight B.C. First Nations sang and danced to songs from their homelands.

Hobiye originated in the Nass Valley, home of the Nisga's peoples.

The ceremony was revived in 1991, and is now celebrated in the Nass Valley and other locations where many Nisga'a live. More than 1,500 Nisga'a make their home in the Vancouver region.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/first-nations-ring-in-new-year-1.3442528>

# PFC saves Louis Riel Day festivities

By Brian Oliver, The Graphic

Monday, February 8, 2016 3:23:14 CST PM



PFC staff from left to right. Shirley Bernard, Elgin Beaulieu, Rochelle Campbell, Jaelin Way, Danielle Carpenter

Last minute plans are quickly coming together for Portage Friendship Centre's (PFC) Louis Riel day festivities.

With just under a week remaining before the calendar's newest statutory holiday arrives, the PFC is putting the finishing touches on a family-friendly event.

The PFC, in partnership with the Portage Community Revitalization Corporation and Portage Regional Recreation Authority, adopted the Louis Riel day event from the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) and is excited to debut it to Portagers.

"I'm not too sure exactly what happened but (the MMF) were not putting (the Louis Riel Day event) on this year," says PFC executive director Shirley Bernard. "We didn't find out until rather late (that MMF wasn't hosting the event), so we're putting something together the best we can. It may not be as large as it has been in previous years, but we are getting quite a bit of a response from the public and quite a bit of volunteers. So we're going ahead with it."

Festivities kick-off bright and early at 10 a.m. on Feb. 15, and include both indoor and outdoor activities such as snow shoeing, horse drawn sleigh rides, bannock cooking and Metis dance performances along with entertainment by local talent Johnny Dietrich and the Silver Dollar Band.

Free skating and swimming will also be offered during the early afternoon leading up to the Portage Terriers game at 4:30 p.m..

The PFC will also be holding a snow shoeing challenge for adults. It will see teams of four compete against each other for a trophy. The PFC hopes that the snow shoeing challenge will become an annual staple at Louis Riel Day festivities for years to come.

The PFC is also looking to add more activity tables to join the booths already planned for the event - some of which include arts and crafts, face painting and caricature drawings.

The event was in jeopardy of not happening at all, but the tireless efforts of staff and volunteers at the PFC – along with some much needed donations - salvaged what would have otherwise been a disappointing day.

“We had absolutely no budget for this,” said Bernard. “We got some helpful donations and we’re quite happy that we’re going to be able to pull this off.”

For more information or to register a table or a snow shoeing team, contact the PFC at 204-239-6333.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.portagedailygraphic.com/2016/02/08/pfc-saves-louis-riel-day-festivities>

## **Music and Opera Appreciation will welcome Anne Lederman to Stratford this month**

BEACON HERALD STAFF  
Monday, February 8, 2016 5:41:27 EST PM



Anne Lederman. (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Renowned musician Anne Lederman will be special guest at an upcoming Music and Opera Appreciation (MOA) event at Festival Inn next Tuesday, Feb. 16, starting at 1:30 p.m.

She will be presenting a concert for guests to the MOA the week after a presentation of the opera Louis Riel. Lederman is a leading expert on Metis fiddling.

A fiddler, singer, multi-instrumentalist and composer, she has also been described as one of the most talented musicians in Canada and a national treasure.

"It is a bit of a coup that she is coming to Stratford," said MOA artistic leader Barbara Young on Monday.

Lederman is a founding member of several duos and bands including Muddy York, The Flying Bulgar Klesmer Band, LOKA, Eh?! and Lederman/Bell.

She has led her own groups, including Come From Every Way and Fiddlesong, and has recorded five CDs under her own name.

She was resident fiddler on Road to Avonlea and has performed often on The Vinyl Cafe, Morningside and Fresh Air.

She is featured on some 50 CDs with other artists. Her bio also includes composing and performance credits for several theatres, including the Blyth Festival.

Her musical roots are in a variety of traditions spanning Metis and French Canadian, Scottish, Irish and Old-Time Canadian, Eastern European and African.

She sings in several languages and plays instruments including mandolin, tenor guitar, piano, bones and jawharp, to name a few.

Her play Spirit of the Narrows, chronicling Lederman's exploration of the world of Aboriginal fiddling, was presented at Hamilton's Pearl Company last fall.

She is founding director of the Worlds of Music Toronto and a faculty member of York University and the Royal Conservatory of Music.

Tickets for the afternoon event are just \$10, which includes refreshments.

For more information, visit [musicandopera.weebly.com](http://musicandopera.weebly.com) or email [musicandopera15@gmail.com](mailto:musicandopera15@gmail.com).

**Direct Link:** <http://www.stratfordbeaconherald.com/2016/02/08/music-and-opera-appreciation-will-welcome-anne-lederman-to-stratford-this-month>

## **Aboriginal Business & Finance**

### **First Nation joins businesses, cities in economic development pact**

ANDREW DUFFY / TIMES COLONIST  
FEBRUARY 5, 2016 08:35 PM





Signing a new constitution for the South Vancouver Island Regional Economic Development Association are, from left, Allan Cahoon of Royal Roads University, Lisa Marie A'Hara of Coast Capital, Songhees Chief Ron Sam, View Royal Mayor David Screech, and Saanich Councillor Fred Haynes. Other representatives of the founding partners wait their turn to sign at the Songhees Wellness Centre.

Photograph By BRUCE STOTESBURY, Times Colonist

It's been talked about for years, and on Friday a new regional economic development body came to life.

Founding partners of the new organization — including most of the region's municipalities, a number of private companies and the Songhees First Nation — signed the constitution document to establish the South Vancouver Island Economic Development Association.

"Up until today, it's all been theoretical," said businessman Dan Dagg. "The rubber hits the road today. The nice thing is we can now take the energy and effort put into creating the organization and start doing the work."

The new organization intends to be accountable to the entire region and has set goals to increase the number of jobs in targeted sectors, increase median household income and draw federal and provincial project funding.

It will have an annual budget of about \$650,000 based on a funding formula involving municipalities other than Sooke and Metchosin. The formula is a 50-50 split between \$1 per person in the municipality plus a percentage of total tax collected. The organization is also targeting another \$400,000 annually from the private sector and other groups in order to leverage matching provincial and federal funds for projects in the order of \$1.5 million per year.

"Everyone is here for the same purpose from a regional perspective and if we collaborate we get that multiplier effect," said Sage Berryman, chief operating officer at Ralmax, one of the private sector founding partners.

Berryman said an organization that pulls together all parts of the region, government agencies, for-profit bodies and academic institutions has been talked about for a long

time. “It’s actually happening this time and that is materially different,” she said. “There is discomfort in it, but that’s OK, because you have to do that as you sort through these things. But this will change things.”

One of the big changes with this body is the inclusion of First Nations. Songhees is the first to sign on as an equal partner, and the association hopes more will follow.

“We are growing fast here so when we were approached we thought it was important we are seen as being part of the regional economy going forward,” said Songhees Chief Ron Sam. “Working together is better than working alone to try and get things done.”

Sam said in recent years relations between the Songhees and the surrounding municipalities have improved tenfold and they are now used to working together.

“Everyone working together for the good of everyone in the region we thought was important,” he said.

Sam said at this point it’s too early to say what the Songhees’ priorities will be, though he hinted there could be better use made of some of the nation’s land.

“The First Nations see this as an opportunity to improve their situation and to connect as equals with the broader economy,” said Dagg. “There are so many opportunities for them, they are asset rich, but need to join with the private sector and this organization may be an incubator for some of that.”

The municipalities who signed on appeared to be agreed on why being part of the new body made sense — it’s easier and more economical to work together.

“Acting collectively we are going to achieve things that we couldn’t possibly dream of individually,” said Sidney Mayor Steve Price. “From Sidney’s point of view, we are concerned about empty store fronts, but if the business climate in the whole region is rising then of course those stores will fill up.”

Saanich Coun. Fred Haynes noted the region is an amalgamated economy. “And the name of the game is collaborative resources around economic development,” he said, noting that will help Greater Victoria compete with metropolitan areas all over North America. “We have the most amazing location [and] these economic development activities will allow us to present this as one of the best places to be.

“It’s a collaborative marketing piece that will raise our game around the world.”

The board is made up of Jayne Bradbury, Fort Properties; tech veteran Bill Bergen; Christina Clarke, Songhees Nation; Jill Doucette, Synergy Enterprises; Royal Roads

University's Pedro Márquez; business consultant Craig Norris; Tourism Victoria CEO Paul Nurse; tech veteran Bob Skene; and McDonald's restaurants owner Ken Taylor.

- See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/business/first-nation-joins-businesses-cities-in-economic-development-pact-1.2167024#sthash.bo2j1bMO.dpuf>

## FN's open for business

Jennifer Zielinski - Feb 7, 2016 / 5:00 am [Share | Print](#)



Calvin Helin is First Nations and he is also a part of a proposal to build a pipeline in the same place the rejected Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline was proposed.

The son of a Tsimshian Nation Chief, an author and public speaker, Helin is also the president of Eagle Spirit Energy, a First Nation's backed company.

Helin was in Kelowna on Thursday for a public speaking session at a Chamber of Commerce luncheon alongside a representative from Vancouver's Aquilini Investment Group Inc., who has financially endorsed Eagle Spirit's proposed pipeline.

During Helin's presentation he noted it was the first time he had delivered this speech to an audience that was not primarily First Nations.

He started off the presentation talking about change and First Nation's people's history of adaptation to change. He said there is a wide misconception that companies can not do business with First Nation's people, but Aquilini's partnership with Eagle Spirit proves otherwise.

He said the economy is changing in Canada and the way big projects were done in the past in Northern B.C. were to push through with the government's consent, but not to include those living in the area who would be impacted. Helin emphasized several times that when the Eagle Spirit pipeline was proposed, every First Nations community along its route was to be addressed and their concerns considered.

He stated the main issue was the environment and what effects the pipeline would have to the region. According to Helin, Eagle Spirit's proposal has a first class environmental model as well as the support of every First Nation chief along the route of its own proposed oil pipeline through northern B.C.

Helin addressed issues from the port the pipeline would use, to bitumen, to shipping, to the the U.S. use of oil.

First Nations, according to Helin, recognize the importance of alternative oil export markets to the national economy and that northern B.C. is the best place for a pipeline to reach the Asian market.

The pipeline being proposed runs between Fort McMurray, Alta. and Prince Rupert, and has an estimated cost of \$14 billion. Helin said he could see the completion date for the project being four years.

He ended his presentation with the statement that First Nations are open for business but companies must take time to talk to people, and not just First Nations but all people who live in northern B.C. who would be impacted by the outcome of a pipeline.

The former lawyer's presentation was only 30 minutes long, but was well received by those in attendance.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.castanet.net/news/Kelowna/157870/FN-s-open-for-business>

## Vancouver Explores Its First Nations Roots

### Heads Up

By ELAINE GLUSAC FEB. 9, 2016



Totem poles in Stanley Park.

Wearing a woven cedar headband that distinguished her from the other boots-and-backpack-clad hikers, Candace Campo guided a walk in Stanley Park in Vancouver last

fall, pointing out path-side huckleberries and blackberries. She stripped a soft piece of bark from a fraying cedar trunk to demonstrate how it can be used as fiber for clothing, and detailed how to extract vitamin C from western hemlock needles by steeping them in boiling water.

“Stanley Park is the park of the people,” she said, intimating far more than the inhabitants of the glass high-rises that overlook the nearly 1,000-acre peninsular park on Vancouver’s waterfront. “Prior to interactions with Europe, Stanley Park was central to the Coast Salish people.”

Their ancestors have lately come to reclaim the region, at least in the interpretive sense. Beyond the totem poles long displayed in the park, visitors to Vancouver can now gain a fuller appreciation for the area’s native people, known as First Nations, by staying in the city’s only First Nations’ lodge, touring an expanded collection of native art, dining on First Nations cuisine and exploring the urban rain forest with a native guide.

Keen to protect their traditions, many indigenous tribes have long maintained a cautious distance from tourism. But tribal bands in British Columbia have found respectful, and increasingly popular, ways to convey their culture to the curious. In 2015, according to the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia, business grew 10 percent over the year before, to more than \$50 million in sales. And the newly elected Canadian prime minister, Justin Trudeau, has made it his business to increase ties to First Nations peoples, appointing two indigenous ministers to his cabinet.

“Even people in Canada don’t know First Nations cultures,” said Keith Henry, former chief executive of the association. “It’s doing a lot for reconciliation. People want to hear authentic stories of the history of the land and of the people.”

Moving into the province’s biggest city, Vancouver, First Nations interests have produced the city’s first native hotel, **Skwachays Lodge** ([skwachays.com](http://skwachays.com)). Proceeds from the intimate 18-room boutique hotel, opened in the fall of 2014, support 24 artists in residence in the building. Six native artists paired up with six local interior designers to create the individually decorated rooms that might include the legend of the raven covering one wall, or evoke a community gathering place known as a long house through abstract aboriginal motifs of animals.



Stanley Park’s Seawall path.

A First Nations gallery does double duty as the hotel reception, and the hotel maintains a tentlike sweat lodge on the roof terrace. It adjoins a Smudge Room where guests can undergo a purification ritual under the guidance of a medicine man.

“This was a healing lodge originally for First Nations people coming to the city for medical treatment, and we wanted to make the rituals available to our guests, who are interested in sustainable tourism and native culture,” said Maggie Edwards, general manager of the hotel.



At Salmon n Bannock, the Game Sampler, with cedar jelly, bannock crackers, smoked bison, cured elk, boar rosemary salami, smoked Cheddar.

Across False Creek from the Downtown Eastside neighborhood, where the hotel is located, is **Salmon 'n Bannock** ([salmonandbannock.net](http://salmonandbannock.net)), which says it is Vancouver's sole First Nations restaurant. Its owner, Inez Cook, opened the 30-seat cafe in 2010 with just five menu items as a way of exploring her own First Nations background as a Nuxalk native.

“I wanted the word bannock in the title so First Nations people would understand,” said Ms. Cook, referring to the often heavy unleavened bread that is a staple of indigenous diets across Canada, “and I wanted salmon for people who might not know bannock.”



Moon Suite at the Skwachays Lodge.



In keeping with the restaurant's mission to prepare native foods such as wild fish and game in modern ways, its airy bannock is served steaming with cedar jelly, osso bucco is prepared with elk, and smoked halibut comes with blueberry wild rice.

The **Capilano Tea House & Botanical Soda Company**([thecapilano.com](http://thecapilano.com)) was opened on Feb. 1 by the mother-daughter team Michelle and Paisley Nahanee of the Squamish Nation, offering local berries and nettles fused with globally sourced teas, and bannock and jam.

Vancouver has long been a showcase for First Nations art, led by the immersive University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology. Last fall, the **Vancouver Art Gallery** ([vanartgallery.bc.ca](http://vanartgallery.bc.ca)) acquired much of the acclaimed First Nations art of the late San Francisco collector George Gund III, which includes animated masks of an eagle, a shark and other spirits by the master carver Robert Davidson.

Back in Stanley Park, Candace Campo concluded her 90-minute **Talking Trees** tour ([talaysay.com](http://talaysay.com)) by specifying medicinal uses for native plants, noting a renewed interest on the part of First Nations people, as well as visitors, in indigenous practices from the arts to cooking.

"The rain forest is the reason our people are returning to the plants," she said. "They are a free pharmacy."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/14/travel/vancouver-justin-trudeau-canucks.html>

## Aboriginal restaurant, fine food and better hockey bag are winners of entrepreneurship competition

Thursday, February 11, 2016 3:12:41 EST PM



Crystal Sarantoulas, project manager, Henry Bernick Entrepreneurship Centre presents first place award for the exCite! entrepreneurship contest to Brandon Pitawanakwat. GEORGIAN COLLEGE PHOTO



(SUBMITTED) - Brandon Pitawanakwat is working hard to see his dream come true – the Crowned Eagle, a restaurant in Collingwood that will specialize in Aboriginal fine food.

Pitawanakwat, a Georgian College student, is the first-place winner in the latest exC!te Experience competition offered through Georgian's Henry Bernick Entrepreneurship Centre (HBEC).

The competition allows participants to pitch their real-world business ideas to a panel of judges who offer not only prizes but also expert advice on entrants' business plans.

Twenty-five entrepreneurs participated in the most recent competition. The application deadline for the next round of pitches is coming up fast, on Friday, Feb. 19.

Pitawanakwat, co-owner in the restaurant with his mother Joanne Bradshaw, says their business plan is almost complete.

"We are in the planning stages, looking forward to accessing market research through the Henry Bernick Entrepreneurship Centre to find the right location for our restaurant," he said. "It will be an upscale restaurant focusing exclusively on Aboriginal cuisine," he said.

Two competitors tied for second place. One of them is Monica Roe of Crooked Tree Fine Foods in Collingwood. She learned about the competition by attending some of Georgian's food entrepreneurship events.

"I am in my first year of business and have been managing food production from home. I graduated from the Business Enterprise Resource Network Self-Employment Assessment program and quickly transitioned to accessing HBEC support and workshops in Collingwood," she said.

Her business specializes in organic sprouted tree nut cheese spreads and crackers.

Jeff Texmo, another Georgian student, tied with Roe for second place with his product, the Ultimate Gear Organizer. It's a unique pull-out sports bag for storing hockey equipment.

"I have been working on this product for the past four years and have accessed mentorship and support through the Henry Bernick Entrepreneurship Centre," Texmo said. "It started with people inquiring and wanting to get their hands on my product, and that inspired me to locate a manufacturing plant and seek out business advice."

The Ultimate Gear Organizer is market-ready. Texmo has created a website with an e-business voucher grant through Ontario Centres of Excellence funding in partnership with Georgian College's Centre for Applied Research and Innovation. He will be launching the website and associated social media soon.

Marc Francis' proposal for Ride On, an indoor bike park, won third place. Francis, a Georgian College student, has been an enthusiastic member of Power Up a mentorship group sponsored by HBEC.

"Taking part in the exC!te experience through HBEC gave me an opportunity that doesn't arise very often. I encourage all my friends and classmates at Georgian to participate in it," he said.

"It's not about the prize but more about the experience. The benefit was having influential people (panelist and judges) see me and hear my dream. My business plan is developed and I am actively seeking financing and the 'right' location."

For more, visit [GeorgianCollege.ca/hbec](http://GeorgianCollege.ca/hbec) .

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thebarrieexaminer.com/2016/02/11/aboriginal-restaurant-fine-food-and-better-hockey-bag-are-winners-of-entrepreneurship-competition>

## Aboriginal Community Development

### Nunavik Parks hopes to draw new visitors with packaged trips

**Parks agency also hopes to double number of local visitors**

SARAH ROGERS, February 04, 2016 - 11:00 am



Visitors to Kuurujuaq park rest outside their igloo-shaped shelter along the Koroc River valley. A number of different travel packages offer the chance to visit the park on snowshoes, snowmobile or even by dog team. (PHOTO BY ERIC BOZET/NUNAVIK PARKS)



Tursujuq park, along the eastern shores of Hudson Bay, offers scenic views of Nastapoka Falls. The park,

Quebec's largest, attracted about 70 visitors between June and October 2015. (PHOTO BY BENJAMIN DY/NUNAVIK PARKS)

It doesn't come cheap, but for just under \$5,000, you can trace the century-old travel routes of Ungava Bay Inuit along the Koroc Valley on cross-country skis, snowshoes or snowmobile.

The price includes transportation to the site, Kuururjuaq, one of Nunavik's three provincial parks, plus meals, nine days' accommodation and the services of a local guide.

As one of its new packaged excursions, Nunavik Parks invites visitors to "Follow our ancestors' footsteps to Qurlutuarjuq," along the turquoise and winding Koroc River.

It's one of many pre-planned trips the organization has recently packaged and posted to its newly-launched website, where visitors can go to discover what Nunavik's parks have to offer.

"It's been over a year that we've been working on this, a site that gives people more access to the actual experience they can have at our parks," said Patrick Graillon, assistant director of park operations at the Kativik Regional Government.

Nunavik Parks' original website was quite technical, he added. There was too much text.

The new website is more user-friendly, he said, and allows visitors to choose between three main sections: parks, culture and experience.

By clicking on all-inclusive packages, potential visitors can quickly see the types of travel experiences they could have in the region, while learning about history and Inuit culture.

Graillon calls the site a "work in progress."

"We hope to add more experiences," he said. "And we hope to respond as quickly as possible to the demands people might have."

Nunavik has three provincial parks, parc national des Pingualuit west of Kangiqsujuaq, which centres around the vast Pingualuit crater; parc national Kuururjuaq, spread out along the Koroc Valley and surrounding Torngat Mountain range; and its newest addition, parc national Tursujuq on the shores of Hudson Bay with its scenic cuestas.

While they are managed by the provincial government of Quebec, the parks are called "national" in French.

Graillon acknowledges that the new site is targeted to potential visitors from the South.

But Nunavik Parks has made efforts over the last year to reach out to local and Inuit visitors.

Last year, the organization offered a contest to win weekend packages to visit the parks, an initiative they hope to repeat again in 2016.

Visitor numbers vary greatly, Graillon said — there is no norm. Between June 2015 and October 2015, the three parks each welcomed between 70 and 80 visitors each, but past years have seen larger and smaller groups.

“In 2015, we actually had a lot more visitors from the North, and fewer from the South,” Graillon said.

“With the arrival of the site and weekend packages, we hope to almost double the number of people from the North who visit the park this year.”

But parks officials also hope its new website will help promote tourism in the region’s three parks, with a fourth park to be made official later this year.

You can visit the website at [nunavikparks.ca](http://nunavikparks.ca).

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavik\\_parks\\_look\\_to\\_draw\\_new\\_visitors\\_with\\_packaged\\_trips/www.nunavikparks.ca](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavik_parks_look_to_draw_new_visitors_with_packaged_trips/www.nunavikparks.ca)

## **A HORROR STAY IN THE NORTH QUESTIONED**

magictv | February 4, 2016 | News |



**The horrifying story of a stay in the north of a young hockey coach arouses anger and disbelief in Nunavik.**

The testimony of Michael Cloutier, who claims to have been stabbed in the night in the far north, is seriously questioned by several people consulted by Sivertimes and well familiar with the matter.

Michael Cloutier says he lived for eight months of hell, in 2010 and 2011, in the village of Puvirnituq. The young man, aged 18, would include stabbed home at 4 am by Inuit seeking alcohol.

A published report Monday in The Sun under the title “horror stay in the North” has been widely shared on social networks. It reports that “no hospital service during the weekend,” Michael Cloutier was forced to dress his wound himself, communicating via Skype with a nurse in Montreal.

” It’s a lie. Services are offered in the seven municipalities on the coast of Hudson Bay 24 hours a day, seven days a week, “says Jane Beaudoin, Executive Director of the Health Centre Innulitsivik, headquartered in Puvirnituk.

Contacted by, Michael Cloutier admitted he could have contacted a nurse on duty in Puvirnituk. But it has not felt the need. “I was okay with the nurse from Montreal and my stepfather. I felt confident. ”

The stepfather of Mr. Cloutier, Marien Grenier, is a family physician retired from L’Ancienne-Lorette. It was impossible to reach him to confirm the version of his stepson.

Michael Cloutier went to the hospital on Monday, more than 48 hours after the assault. He was diagnosed with “major depression,” says Michael Cloutier, as well as a “superficial laceration 9 centimeters,” according to a source who viewed the medical report.

According to our sources, Michael Cloutier refused to show his wound to the people around him – even the police officers conducting the investigation – under the pretext that she was infected and that his stepfather had advised him not to remove his bandage .

Michael Cloutier had never seen her attacker and was not able to identify later.

Michael Cloutier also argues that two months before being stabbed a drunk Inuit had pointed him in the face with rifle in the evening on his doorstep. He did not tell anyone in the village and reported the incident to the police two months later. In this case too, the attacker was never identified.

Sun, Michael Cloutier Puvirnituk described as a violent town, out of control, where young teachers to strike blows chair and assaulted in hockey locker rooms. “I read that and it hurts,” despairs Joé Juneau, who has set up a hockey program for Nunavik youth.

In 2010, Joe Juneau gave a hand to Michael Cloutier for him to get a job in Puvirnituk. The role of the young man was to help implement the hockey program in the village. In general, according Joé Juneau, it works pretty well. “In 10 years I have never heard such a story! ”

“In this article, we try to make people believe that young Puvirnituk are a gang of criminals in the making. It’s ridiculous. Rather, it is the young who are listening and working. ”

Sun, Michael Cloutier suggested that the Puvirnituk authorities had voluntarily stopped providing its holder with drinking water. “I do not know where he got that idea,” retorted the mayor, Levi Amarualik. He explained that the town sometimes lack of water, supplied by trucks, because of the blizzard.

“There are people who arrive here without any idea where they are. They develop a mentality of customers live in the ghetto and of themselves as victims. The more paranoid, they lack water, think they are targeted. But there Inuit families who lack water, too, on a regular basis! “Laments a resident of Puvirnituk.

Michael Cloutier, who describes himself on his Twitter account as a “survivor of the North,” said for his part will raise awareness. “I know the North victims, and these people feel misunderstood. People say it can not, it is in Quebec, they do not exist, these stories. Well yes, it exists! ”

## **two cancers**

Shortly after his return in disaster Puvirnituk, Michael Cloutier maintains that he was floored in quick succession by two cancers, first in the stomach and spinal cord.

The young man said he attended both cancers as he treated his abdominal injury: by appealing to his stepfather. “We talk about cancer, it’s serious. With my father, I feel safe, he knows his stuff. ”

He said he was also treated by his family doctor from Quebec, and adds not want to say more about that “respect for [his] family.”

The last years have been difficult, he says.

“The week I was stabbed, I was suicidal. I fell in survival mode. I told myself I must live. When I came back to Quebec, I relapsed deep enough, “says Mr. Cloutier.

The first cancer would manifest five months after his return from Puvirnituk, in November 2011. The young man said to be in complete remission since May, 2015.

In a tweet issued November 7, 2012, Michael Cloutier wrote: “I just got the call from Jean Charest to support me and see me soon. It made my day! ”

Asked about this, Michael Cloutier maintains receiving the call of former Prime Minister: “He supported me as I argued when he lost the election. ”

“We all peeled, we outlined the agenda items of November 2012 and we have no indication that this call took place,” says the assistant of Jean Charest, Grégory Larocque, adding that it is possible that Mr. Charest has made the call without having preserved traces.

After giving us an interview, Michael Cloutier reversed its decision. He did not want to work with La Presse. “Do not waste your time, I made my choice of media,” he writes in an email.

For his part, Joe Juneau keeps a bitter taste of the testimony of Michael Cloutier, which he fears the devastating impact for relations, already fragile, between North and South. “There is so much ignorance of indigenous issues that a large proportion of the readers will believe it. It’s frustrating, because it is not at all the reality. I spent part of my life working to better understanding among peoples ... We really did not need that. “

Direct Link: <http://sivertimes.com/a-horror-stay-in-the-north-questioned/7262>

## Programs for aboriginal families affected by domestic violence gets boost

By Willow Fiddler Global News, February 4, 2016 5:09 pm



FILE PHOTO: A vigil is held outside Vancouver City Hall on October 4, 2015, as part of a nationwide event designed to honour the lives of missing and murdered aboriginal women. Aboriginal families affected by domestic violence in B.C. are expected to benefit from a new boost in community-based programs and services.

The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation said in an announcement today that 24 projects were selected to receive a total of \$1.5 million to support culture-based domestic violence healing and prevention programs.

This is part of the province's three-year Provincial Domestic Violence Plan, which is now in its second year.

"Many of these programs incorporate Aboriginal culture and traditional practices, which will help ensure the content resonates with the participants and has a meaningful impact in the lives of families and communities throughout B.C.," said John Rustad, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation and MLA for Nechako Lake.

The Provincial Domestic Violence Plan is a \$5.5 million commitment from the government to make B.C. a safer place for women, children and anyone who has been affected by domestic violence. Of this, \$2 million was allocated to develop and deliver programs specifically for Aboriginal, women, men and children – including victims and perpetrators. The province announced in Sept. 2015 that \$500,000 was going towards increasing access to transition house and safe-home services for Aboriginal women and children.





British Columbia Premier Christy Clark signs a memorandum of understanding in North Vancouver, B.C., June 13, 2014 with First Nations groups pledging to end violence against aboriginal women and girls. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Jonathan Hayward

In 2013, there were 12,359 reports of intimate partner violence throughout B.C. However, it is believed that only one in four women report their abuse to police.

Additionally, aboriginal women are three-times more likely to experience violence at the hands of their partners than non-Aboriginal women.

Each of the 24 programs selected will receive between \$14,000 and \$70,000 for support of new and existing programs ranging from individual counselling services to family and community-based discussions with a cultural focus.

The province said the successful applicants were chosen in Dec. 2015 by a partnership table made up of representatives from the Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women, the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence and the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation and the Ministry of Justice.

The programs receiving funds are in Lillooet, Chilliwack, Cranbrook, Kelowna, Vanderhoof, Kamloops, D'arcy, Vancouver and Victoria.

**Direct Link:** <http://globalnews.ca/news/2498981/programs-for-aboriginal-families-affected-by-domestic-violence-gets-boost/>

## **National food strategy will include aboriginal input, says Agriculture Minister**

### **Rising cost of food, sinking dollar, has some calling for Canadian food sovereignty**

By Sima Sahar Zerehi, [CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 05, 2016 8:00 AM CT Last Updated: Feb 05, 2016 8:00 AM CT



Iqaluit's Leesee Papatsie, founder of the group Feeding My Family, said the price of food in the North has always been high, but with the California drought and the sinking loonie, groceries bills are getting out of hand. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

Canada's Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada says he's committed to developing a national food policy that includes input from aboriginal groups, but some experts say real investment is needed for food security to be achieved.

"Our Minister's mandate letter includes many important commitments, including the development of a national food policy," Minister Lawrence MacAulay's office stated in an email.

"Canada has a solid reputation for producing safe and healthy food, and the Minister intends to build on that reputation, and consider the perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders, including aboriginal groups, in determining the potential shape and direction of the food policy."



'I strongly support a Canadian strategy that supports aboriginal harvesting,' said Leesee Papatsie. (John Van Dusen/CBC)

Iqaluit's Leesee Papatsie, founder of the group Feeding My Family, said the price of food in the North has always been high, but with the California drought and the sinking loonie, grocery bills are getting out of hand.

She points to a cucumber in her fridge that cost over \$5 and 4L of milk that cost more than \$10.

"I strongly support a Canadian strategy that supports aboriginal harvesting," said Papatsie.

She says remote fly-in communities in the North need a multi-pronged approach to food security that is not only reliant on food harvested and processed in the South.

## Right time for strategy

The rising cost of food has some experts calling for a comprehensive national food strategy in Canada that includes investment and capital.

"Knowing that a lot of people have actually been sticker shocked for the last few weeks, I think it's the right time to move on a strategy," said Sylvain Charlebois, from the University of Guelph's Food Institute.

"Canada is really at the cross-roads if we are to think about food security for example or food production, those are, I think, things that we need to think hard about and we need a vision for," Charlebois said.

He said Canada needs to learn from other countries like Australia, the United Kingdom and Ireland, which already have national food strategies in place.



'Knowing that a lot of people have actually been sticker shocked for the last few weeks, I think it's the right time to move on a strategy,' said Sylvain Charlebois from the University of Guelph's Food Institute. (CBC)

He said the minister of Agriculture's mandate letter does not guarantee a comprehensive strategy.

"It is difficult to feel reassured by the content of that letter because the letter mentions ranchers and farmers and doesn't necessarily address research and development, innovation, food security, northern communities — it doesn't mention investments at all," said Charlebois.

"It mentions healthy foods, local foods, and of course those aspects are important, but the vision prescribed in the mandate letter is nowhere near as comprehensive as it should be."

Charlebois says Canada is far too reliant on imported products and often fails to capitalize on local food supply.

"If we are to believe that food sovereignty is important in Canada, we need to couple food production with food processing."

## Canada gets a 'B'



'Overall I think Canada is a 'B' performer and we'd like to become an 'A' performer,' said Michael Bloom, with the Conference Board of Canada. (Conference Board of Canada)

The Conference Board of Canada has been focusing on the need for a national food strategy since 2010, which it says should cover five key areas: food safety, healthy food, household food security, industry prosperity and environmental sustainability.

Last month the board released its first national report card, which assesses how Canada is doing in those areas compared to 17 leading economies in the world.

"Overall I think Canada is a 'B' performer and we'd like to become an 'A' performer," said Michael Bloom, vice president of industry and business strategy at the Conference Board of Canada.

Bloom said Canada has issues with household food security, especially in the territories.

"The North has unusually high levels of household food security concerns," said Bloom.

"Partly because there's geography, many foods have to be imported, and it's a long way to go."

## **Incorporating country food**

Bloom says food security is only part of the problem in the North, another major issue is access to healthy food.

"We need to think about what food is particularly good for folks from different cultural backgrounds and living in different environments, with their own particular genetic makeup," said Bloom.

Incorporating country food harvested by indigenous communities is one solution to addressing Canada's diversity when designing a food policy.

"It makes very good sense to look at framing a diet for healthy consumption that includes foods that have been part of a long-term pattern of healthy life," Bloom said.

He hopes to see further collaboration between the various ministries to tackle food diversity in a national strategy.

"One of the things that I hope will happen is that the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food working with his cabinet colleagues including the Minister of Indigenous Affairs to see where their mandates overlap."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/national-food-strategy-1.3434908>

## **Mild winter blocks access to ice roads in remote Ontario reserves**

JULIEN GIGNAC

The Globe and Mail

Published Friday, Feb. 05, 2016 7:19PM EST

Last updated Friday, Feb. 05, 2016 7:20PM EST

Many remote First Nations communities in Northern Ontario are suffering the effects of one of the mildest winters on record: Roughly 60 per cent of ice roads connecting dozens of reserves to southern municipalities have yet to open. Most of those that have opened can only sustain light traffic – snowmobiles or small, half-ton trucks.

Frigid temperatures are welcomed in the region, as ice roads function as lifelines to otherwise landlocked First Nations, expediting the transportation of such supplies as diesel fuel, building materials and food. Sometimes community members themselves

make the trip to Thunder Bay to stock up on essentials. Without winter roads, northern communities have been forced to ship supplies by air, a costly endeavour.

“Nothing’s moving,” said Darrell Morgan, president of Morgan Fuels, which is a top distributor of fuel in the Northern Ontario region. “The lack of ice is a tough go. We supply some communities with fuel through air freight, but it’s extremely expensive.”

Fuel is particularly important because many communities use diesel-powered heat and electric generators.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler said if ice roads continue to thaw, there will be no other choice but to fly in more supplies. NAN represents 49 Northern Ontario First Nations, roughly 28 of which rely on ice roads. There are about 45,000 people in the region.

“Communities are starting to run low on fuel,” Mr. Fiddler said. “Most of our communities rely on diesel power generators, so they could just start to shut down – health centres, schools.”

The ice road near Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, situated in Northwestern Ontario near Hudson Bay, is still closed. “There is an average of 14 inches of ice on lakes to be crossed,” said Chief James Cutfeet, adding that is not thick enough to drive on.

Neskantaga First Nation sits roughly 10 hours north of Thunder Bay and is home to about 300 people. Its ice road was closed for the better part of the winter and it’s still not an adequate thickness to support freight trucks. Its community buildings run off diesel fuel; a dwindling supply has caused concern.

“Normally we’d open our roads early, like during the Christmas time,” said Neskantaga Chief Wayne Moonias. “Usually at this time of year it’s an opportunity for families to stock up on some of the things they would need throughout the whole year. The window of opportunity is limited now.”

On a good year, there would be 28 to 26 inches of ice, said Mr. Moonias; this year it ranges between 16 to 22 inches.

Neskantaga is a vulnerable community. Last month, a 14-year-old girl took her own life. The community was placed under a state of emergency in 2013 after there were four suicides and 20 suicide attempts, according to a NAN press release. Neskantaga has grappled with drug abuse, a diminished police force and the absence of mental-health services on-reserve.

Further isolation is the last thing the community needs. Price inflation on goods adds to the strain: Mr. Moonias said a package of 24 rolls of toilet paper costs \$26.

Like many First Nations north of Thunder Bay, Naskantaga has been forced to boil for years – since 1995. Warm weather patterns may have long-term implications: Mr. Moonias said a shipment of water-treatment upgrade supplies might be jeopardized due to the conditions of the winter roads.

“Up north, there are no alternatives,” said Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day. “Winter roads change the socioeconomic fabric of First Nations communities in the North.”

Mr. Day said northern winter road networks generate anywhere between \$5-million and \$6-million in revenue.

He recently approached Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett and raised the need for developing a “strategic approach” to help solve the laggard infrastructure system faced by many remote communities in the North. “Investment North is my proposal to government that we need to draw some very clear parameters around the investment needs of the remote north,” he said.

Mr. Day wants to look at ensuring access to four types of infrastructure: broadband, water, electrification and roads.

“Climate change,” he said, “is really going to drive home the need for the proper strategy for Northern Ontario and the citizens that live in those remote communities.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/mild-winter-blocks-access-to-ice-roads-in-remote-ontario-reserves/article28628410/>

## **Cree Nation Government works on cabin fire safety after Bussy Lake deaths**

**Fire prevention course, installation of smoke detectors and fire extinguishers in the works**

By Celina Wapachee, CBC News Posted: Feb 05, 2016 2:30 PM CT Last Updated: Feb 05, 2016 2:30 PM CT



Jason Coonishish, left, and pilot Philip Petawabano stand with a cross erected at the site of the cabin fire at Bussy Lake. (submitted by Jason Coonishish)



The father of the youngest victim of the Bussy Lake cabin fire in the James Bay region of Quebec says he would like to see fire safety improved in the territory.

**A coroner's report released last month** said a smoke detector could have saved the lives of Jason Coonishish's son and brother, along with three other hunters last spring.

Coonishish's son Chiiwetin, 22, his brother Emmett, 39, as well as Charlie Gunner, 37, Kevin Loon, 33, and David Jimiken, 38, were found dead after a cabin fire in a remote area 300 kilometres north of Chibougamau on April 1, 2015.

"To prevent this from happening to our trappers, there should be fire detectors and carbon monoxide detectors," said Coonishish.

The report by Quebec coroner Luc Malouin found the five hunters died in their sleep of asphyxia caused by the smoke from the fire. Malouin said there was nothing left of the cabin where the men died to lead investigators to the cause of the fire, but there had been a woodstove and a propane oven in the dwelling.

"The tests confirmed they had no alcohol and drugs in their system," said Coonishish. "That is what made me happy reading the report."

But while he supports installing smoke and CO detectors, Coonishish wonders how to prevent their batteries from constantly needing to be replaced during the winter months.

"What I do know about the detectors — when it comes to the winter when it's -30, the batteries can freeze and then they don't work, so to find a way for them not to have that happening."

The Cree Nation Government's regional fire marshal Lee Roy Blacksmith is working with the Cree Trappers Association to improve safety in hunting camps.



The Cree Nation Government's regional fire marshal Lee Roy Blacksmith is working with the Cree Trappers Association to improve fire safety in hunting camps following the cabin fire deaths. (submitted by Lee Roy Blacksmith)

Blacksmith says learning how to maintain the detectors will be one of our priorities when it comes to fire prevention.

"It is our intention to strengthen the fire protection, to install smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and fire extinguishers [in cabins]," says Blacksmith.

"Another thing we have found when it comes to hunters and trappers is that there is a need to provide a prevention course on how to prevent fires and if there is a fire, how to put it out."

Most cabins also have only one exit. Blacksmith said there is a requirement in the national fire safety code that all cabins should have two exits, where there would be an alternative exit in case of an emergency.

The firefighters in the Cree Nation have jurisdiction over category I lands, whereas Quebec's forest fire protection agency, Sopfeu, has jurisdiction over category II lands in the Cree territory.



Blacksmith says it takes time for Sopfeu to respond to remote fires, even if they make the trip, there are other factors that come to make the fire worse such as the wind.

Blacksmith says he witnessed a cabin fire when he was younger.

"It was difficult to hear of this ordeal," he says.

"At that time, luckily no one was injured, but the cause of the fire was due all the things that were too close to the woodstove. We were able to put it out with the cabin intact. And then hearing about the five hunters that passed away triggered a flashback."

He says they are in the process of reviewing the fire protection bylaws under the Cree Nation Government.

Blacksmith also advised people to keep an eye on children as they tend to experiment with matches and lighters.

Coonishish says he has returned to Bussy Lake four times since the fire and says going there helps him heal.

"It makes me happy returning there," says Coonishish.

"Every time I see the places my son used to hunt successfully ... or when I see a particular mountain knowing I was out with them there.

"I want to tell people not to stop going out on the land. It is our source of survival, as it helps us mentally, physically and emotionally."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/cree-nation-cabin-fire-safety-1.3436027>

## Despair and hope in the North

By Miriam King, Bradford Times

Monday, February 8, 2016 2:13:37 EST PM



Volunteers and Indigenous Youth come together at Mishkeegogamang First Nations, during a summer program at the remote Ontario community, in 2012. Submitted

When Paul Burston travelled to Mishkeegogamang First Nations earlier this year, he had hoped to see progress on a planned partnership to establish a hub in the community, located about 1800 km north of Bradford. The hub would serve as a distribution centre for dried soup mix and dried fruit provided by the Southwestern Ontario Gleaners, to supplement the diets of northern communities.

When he arrived, Burston found a community that seemed demoralized – where the hopefulness of last summer, when volunteers brought summer youth programs to the Reserve, had evaporated.

Burston was puzzled, until he learned that the remote community was mourning 12 deaths, in the period before Christmas Eve – including 4 deaths due to a fatal fire.

Mishkeegogamang was reeling from its losses. The community has a fire truck, but without a heated garage in which to store the vehicle, precious time was lost filling the tanker with water.

The deaths underline the issues facing remote northern communities: poverty, inadequate and unsafe housing, lack of services, substance abuse, depression. And although there have recently been a number of repairs undertaken, there is still a need for hundreds of new homes in Mish, to replace substandard buildings that are falling apart, unsafe or moldy.

“It was quite difficult,” Burston said of his visit. “The challenges of the north can't be underestimated. You're dealing with such a huge history of neglect and systemic abuse.”

The bright spot in his 3-day stay in Mish was meeting with students at the local school, who will be coming to Bradford West Gwillimbury later this year, as part of a North-South Exchange in May.

“It was such a mix of good and bad. I've had a few sleepless nights, strategizing,” Burston admitted. While up north, he met with Pickle Lake Mayor Karl Hopf, Youth co-ordinator Destani Skunk and teacher Harriet Viz, and Mishkeegogamang Band Councillors David Masekeyash and Michael Bottle.

To address the needs of remote communities, there is a need to “focus on the basics that make human life comfortable and liveable” in the north - shelter, clean water, food. The Gleaners' dried soup mix – nutritious, light-weight, easily stored – could be part of the solution, in an area where the price of fresh produce is prohibitive and diabetes is rampant, especially among the young.

But one of the stumbling blocks to the construction of the distribution hub has been resistance in the community to using the Gleaners' soup mix. A quantity was delivered, intended to provide nutritious school lunches, but was not used – partly because the mix on its own is bland; partly because it requires special handling, and overnight rehydration. A local Recipe Competition is being considered, to come up with uses, and the Gleaners themselves are looking at adjusting the ingredients, to make it more palatable to local tastes.

But Mishkeegogamang will have to take the initiative and step up to the plate if it wants the investment, “and get beyond crisis, after crisis, after crisis,” Burston said. “It's discouraging, but it won't stop me... I'm working full-time on this.”

It will take long-term commitment to resolve the problems, and rebuild hope, he noted – something that has been lacking, in dealings with remote northern populations.

Earlier in the decade, a North-South Partnership linked organizations, companies, universities and private citizens in Southern Ontario with 30 remote First Nations communities in Northwestern Ontario. Initially, there were at least 9 southern participants; now the funding has all but run out.

“This is the thing that's discouraging for First Nations. People go up there and make promises... and then they're gone,” Burstson said. He found that potential corporate donors appear to be interested primarily in “payback,” refusing because “We don't do business in that area.”

The new federal government can be part of a solution, if promised infrastructure funding goes not only to “shovel-ready” projects, but projects that are “shovel-worthy,” and that can create a better life for the next generation of First Nations children, Burstson said. “I'm hopeful that Trudeau will keep his promises... It's never off my mind – it's the kids, more than anything, to break this cycle of despair.”

He, at least, is committed to the long term; he has been working with Mishkeegogamang for 12 years now. “You have to start somewhere. It's my faith that causes me to think beyond Self, to where the possibilities are. That's what sustains me,” he said. “In my life, I want to make a difference.”

There is another recent development that gives him hope. On January 26, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruled on a 2007 complaint brought by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, its Executive Director Cindy Blackstock, and the Assembly of First Nations, regarding the level of funding for First Nations Child and Family Services.

Initially, the Tribunal refused to hear the complaint, but an appeal by the Canadian Human Rights Commission to the Supreme Court in 2011 led to a full hearing being ordered. The federal government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper spent \$5 million, fighting the complaint and appealing the court ruling - unsuccessfully.

The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ultimately ruled that too many First Nations children were being taken from their families and placed in care – and that services were inadequate and underfunded, compared to off-Reserve families. The Tribunal called the current program and level of funding “discriminatory.”

According to Statistics Canada, aboriginal children make up only 7% of all children in Canada, but 48.1% of children in Foster Care - and federal funding for child services on reserves is 22% to 38% lower than the funding provided by provinces and territories.

The Tribunal ruled the government must “cease the discriminatory practice and take measures to redress and prevent it.”

Federal Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Carolyn Bennett has responded positively. “The Tribunal has made it clear that the system in place today is failing. In a society as prosperous and as generous as Canada, this is unacceptable. This government agrees that we can and must do better,” Bennett and Jody Wilson-Raybould, Minister of Justice and Attorney General, said in a joint statement. “The Prime Minister has tasked us to work with Indigenous Peoples to establish a nation-to-nation relationship, based on recognition of rights, respect, and co-operation, and partnership to make real progress on issues like child welfare... for better outcomes for First Nations children.”

There must be changes, to level the playing field for Indigenous children and give them a more hopeful future, Burston said. "I think we are at a tipping point, and the government has no place to hide... I hope we, as a country and a people, will put aside the racist policies of the past, and that we can move forward with positive programs that build real relationships and an inclusive society for all the people who call Canada home."

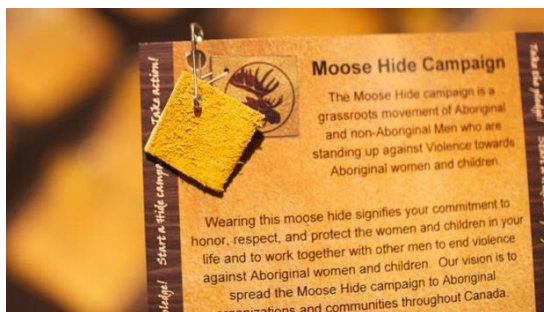
Burston continues to work with the Bradford Ministerial Association and with local school boards to organize a Conference on First Nations issues in Bradford, later this year – Cindy Blackstock has offered to attend, if she can - and hopes to involve local children at both the elementary and secondary school level in building the links between north and south that build hope.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.bradfordtimes.ca/2016/02/07/despair-and-hope-in-the-north>

## **Moose Hide Campaign aims to raise awareness of violence against aboriginal women**

**Grassroots movement seeks help from men in quashing physical abuse of female First Nations**

CBC News Posted: Feb 10, 2016 12:49 PM ET Last Updated: Feb 10, 2016 12:49 PM ET



As part of the initiative, people are encouraged to wear a square of moose hide as a commitment to bring attention to violence against women in Canada. (Moose Hide Campaign/Facebook)

Some Cambrian College students will be wearing a piece of moose hide on their chests Thursday in Sudbury as part of a Canadian social initiative.

The project is called the Moose Hide Campaign and it's purpose is to raise awareness of violence against aboriginal women and children through conversation.

Sarah Kaelas is the student co-ordinator for the grassroots movement at Cambrian College and told CBC News she connects with the project on a personal level.

"Violence is so prevalent not only in indigenous culture, but every culture. I personally haven't been a victim of domestic abuse, but I know many women who have," she said.

"Often times, men are the perpetrators of the violence. So, we need to make them understand the effects of violence — not only physically, but emotionally — and help them understand that their actions affect their communities around them."

The campaign was founded five years ago in B.C. after a First Nation man was hunting for moose on a highway where 18 women have gone missing or were found murdered.

That day, Paul Lacerte was travelling with his daughter, Raven, and was inspired to start the initiative to help ensure she lives a violence-free life. While cleaning a moose later on, they decided to use its hide for the cause.

Since then, men have been meeting annually as part of the project to discuss violence faced by aboriginal women and children, why it happens and how they can help prevent it.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/moose-hide-campaign-sudbury-1.3441900>

## **COLUMN: Staging protests should be a last resort**

By Xavier Kataquapit, The Daily Press-freelance  
Thursday, February 11, 2016 10:52:15 EST AM



Xavier Kataquapit

**TIMMINS** - People have come a long way in obtaining a life with more opportunity and hope.

Through education First Nation people all over Canada are moving into leadership roles in government and private enterprise in Native initiatives and non Native as well. We have very intelligent, well educated, strong and capable leaders in politics, law, education, business and every sector of Canadian society.

I have seen much progress in First Nations first hand with the communities that make up Wabun Tribal Council up here in Northeastern Ontario.



Over the past 20 years, I have watched these First Nations led by their Chiefs and supported by an administration headed by Shawn Batise as they began to lobby government and the private sector resource industries.

Over the years Wabun has become internationally known for negotiating all kinds of agreements with government and the private sector that provide benefits to Wabun First Nations.

Wabun is well recognized across Canada for its expertise in this area and Shawn and the Chiefs have shared their knowledge with other Native organizations. For so many years Native people were very much left out of the loop when it came to participating in any development on traditional lands. That has changed with legal decisions, an evolution in the will of government and industry to negotiate with First Nations when it comes to development of Native traditional lands and the support of public opinion.

I am not saying that every agreement made with developers and government is perfect. This new arrangement is taking time to evolve as everyone learns how to better negotiate and produce fair deals that at the same time consider environmental and conservation issues. It makes me feel good to know that so many people are going to work and are having a better quality of life because of negotiated deals on development. I know that the Wabun First Nations are much better off these days with better housing, improved infrastructure and generally safer, healthier and more well run communities.

Back home in Attawapiskat, my family, friends and a new generation have good jobs with the development of the De Beers Canada Victor Mine.

Through negotiations with the company and First Nation leadership much has been accomplished in terms of finances provided to the community and so much training and good jobs have developed. Are things perfect? No of course they are not, but at the very least instead of being left out of the loop as things were done in the bad old days, we as First Nation people are being listened to and respected when it comes to development on our lands.

Further mineral exploration by De Beers with what is known as the Tango Extension is hoped by the company. If this happens and the results are good the current mine will not close in 2018 and instead continue to produce.

If good negotiation can take place between De Beers and Attawapiskat then this exploration makes sense as there is a skilled workforce already in place, a mine with infrastructure and capability plus a template to follow for further development. Rather than create a lot of conflict and mistrust, we should be making sure we have a place at the table when anything is happening in terms of development on our lands.

Sure, we as First Nation people are close to the land and hold our cultural and traditional lives as sacred however, we should still be able to benefit from anything happening on our lands and require that the private sector and government is making sure that the land, environment, the creatures, the water and the air are protected.

We can build all these requirements into any development agreements we enter into and we can demand that we have our own people and experts on hand to make sure all the steps necessary are taken to protect mother earth.

Many of the top executives with government and resource development these days are open, well educated, sensitive and well meaning. Gone are the days where racism, intolerance and a colonial attitude is put up with. As a matter of fact, more and more governments and the private sector is figuring out that if they are fair up front, honest about their developments in terms of benefits to First Nations and willing to make sure the environment is protected then good things happen for everybody.

Sure there will still be highs and lows in this development process but there should always be a way to negotiate and solve problems.

Yes, we can always revert to protest and blockades and at times these tactics are still needed.

However, there are better and more productive ways to solve problems and allow caring and responsible resource development to take place. I want my people, my family, my friends and our future generations to have good jobs, a great quality of life and still know that mother earth is being protected and respected. We can do it together. The future is as bright and as beautiful as we want to make it.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.timminspress.com/2016/02/11/column-staging-protests-should-be-a-last-resort>

## **Aboriginal Crime, Justice & Law Enforcement**

### **Manitoba grand chief defends RCMP collection of DNA from 2,000 men, boys on First Nation**

**People want answers about killing of 11-year-old Teresa Robinson,  
says Sheila North Wilson**

CBC News Posted: Feb 05, 2016 6:15 AM CT Last Updated: Feb 05, 2016 12:09 PM CT



Sheila North Wilson, grand chief of Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, says people in Garden Hill First Nation support DNA testing because they want to know who killed 11-year-old Teresa Robinson. (CBC )

The head of northern Manitoba chiefs supports an RCMP plan to collect DNA samples from every man and boy between the ages of 15 and 66 in Garden Hill First Nation, as part of the police investigation into the death last May of 11-year-old Teresa Robinson.



The death of Teresa Robinson, 11, is being investigated as a homicide. (Facebook)

Sheila North Wilson, grand chief of Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO), met with RCMP in Winnipeg to discuss the DNA collection, among other issues on Thursday.

"We talked about how unusual this step is by the RCMP for this investigation. This doesn't happen very often, this kind of massive DNA collection and testing," she said after the meeting.

"I think the community's been calling for something to happen, and for the investigation to move."

The people of Garden Hill First Nation want answers, said North Wilson, and they want closure.

"If that means an inconvenience ... I think they're willing to do that," she said.

About 2,000 samples are to be collected as part of the investigation into the murder of Teresa Robinson.

Garden Hill chief Arnold Flett said he believed most people have complied with the RCMP's request for a sample.

## **'Systemic racism' alleges lawyer**

RCMP said they are asking men and boys to give a sample voluntarily but Corey Shefman, a human rights lawyer in Winnipeg, has a different interpretation.

The past president of the Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties said the RCMP's request is far from voluntary and is an example of the systemic racism First Nations people face.

"Particularly if you're an indigenous person, if a police officer shows up at your door and says, 'We'd like you to voluntarily give us some of your DNA,' if you were to say no, the next thing to come out of their mouths is not going to be 'OK, thanks, have a nice day.' It's going to be, 'Why don't you want to give us your DNA? Are you hiding something?'" he said.

By refusing the test, Shefman said, people risk becoming a suspect.

North Wilson defended the RCMP's tactic as a means to an important end for the community. Garden Hill residents don't feel safe because Robinson's killer hasn't been caught, she said.

"They're desperate for answers and I think I have to support what they want. If they don't feel like their rights are being violated then I have to respect that," North Wilson said.

Calls to the Robinson family and other members of the community were not returned Thursday.

The RCMP's collection of DNA samples began last weekend and police would not say how much longer it will take.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/manitoba-grand-chief-defends-rcmp-collection-of-dna-from-2-000-men-boys-on-first-nation-1.3434835>

## First Nations find culturally sensitive support at Peel courthouse



### PAN courtworkers

photo by Bryon Johnson

Court workers Brittany Wylie, Sage Longclaws, and Charleen Ayeni outside the A. Grenville and William Davis Courthouse in Brampton. They are affiliated with the Peel Aboriginal Network and help out aboriginal people who are in court.

Brampton Guardian

By Pam Douglas, Feb 07, 2016

Sherwood Rogers didn't have the greatest childhood.

"I wasn't the best kid growing up," the 27-year-old Bramptonian admits.

He was born and raised on a reserve in Sarnia.

"Not the best area in the world to grow up," he says.

Then he moved to the city, and "it got worse."

"I brought my problems with me," he says.

But five years ago, he managed to land a "really good job" as a stonemason in Brampton, and he began to turn his life around, until he got into a disagreement with a man he was staying with, and ended up with a minor assault charge.

That meant Rogers could have been facing jail time, and going to jail meant losing his job.

"My boss told me, if I go to jail, he'll give my job to someone else," he says. "The diversion program allowed me to keep it."

The criminal diversion program is something Rogers learned about when his lawyer introduced him to Charleen Ayeni, Peel Aboriginal Network's (PAN) court worker.

It offers alternative resolutions to criminal charges and involves admitting your "wrongs" and addressing them. It gave Rogers the chance to resolve the problem and keep his job.

He's one of the success stories bolstering the work PAN is doing for the estimated 30,000 First Nations, Metis and Inuit people living in Peel.

PAN, which opened in 2003, has been working hard in the last couple of years to fill a growing need in the local Aboriginal community – the need for legal services.

"There were no support services in the (court) system for Aboriginal accused," PAN Executive Director Kris Noakes says.

But in just a couple of short years, PAN has put Ayeni into the Brampton courthouse and lawyer Sage Longclaws is working with Aboriginal people accused both inside the courtroom and out.

PAN has started offering free monthly legal clinics, too, that cover criminal and family law as well as landlord and tenant rights.

"We do it in partnership with Legal Aid Ontario," Noakes says. "It's really important for the community. They don't have lawyers. They don't know how to find lawyers."

Many First Nations people aren't aware of the unique options they have in the criminal justice system, according to Noakes. The centre has even started writing Gladue reports, which are used by the courts to give special consideration to First Nations offenders who plead guilty. Traditional healing and other options are favoured over incarceration, and it helps prevent recidivism.

“It’s reflecting our traditional laws and our traditional ways of doing things because we do have our own justice systems,” Noakes says.

Ayeni has been working in the Peel courthouse since last August, acting as a resource for Aboriginal residents of Brampton and Mississauga who find themselves in trouble with the law.

She points them to the community resources they need, helps with housing or other issues and contacts family, and that can mean all the difference in their lives.

For Rogers, it introduced him to PAN and Community Intake Co-ordinator Brittany Wylie. It’s a connection he now keeps.

“I’m still calling and checking in with Brittany and letting her know how I’m doing,” he says.

Sometimes, he attends the special events held at the centre – talking to elders or doing beadwork.

“It’s good to go do things like that because for me, a lot of my friends are not good people,” he says, adding he has distanced himself from 98 per cent of them.

“Now I’m trying to fill my time with things that aren’t negative,” he says.

Making lawyers aware Ayeni is at the courthouse and available to help Aboriginal people accused is the key, as is getting First Nations people to self-identify.

“Self-identification is a big obstacle. A lot of people don’t want to self-identify,” Noakes says. “They don’t want to be stereotyped.”

“If your legal representative isn’t aware, they can’t explore those options,” says Longclaws. “And it is difficult to have people self-identify.”

Longclaws spends his days at the courthouse, working as legal aid counsel, and some evenings at the PAN centre on Britannia Road in Mississauga, offering free legal advice. As word spreads, attendance grows with each legal clinic held there.

“In the time period I’ve been here, it’s growing,” Longclaws says.

He says many First Nations people find a greater comfort level being represented by someone with an understanding of their culture, and PAN has a list of First Nations lawyers they can offer those looking for legal representation.

“Some First Nations people are from very difficult backgrounds because they come from reserves and are trying to integrate into this Canadian society,” Longclaws says.

“It’s been a good reception by First Nations people,” Longclaws says of PAN’s legal services. “They have been appreciative.”

Rogers, who admits “a lot of times I get angry,” says he is also getting advice from the centre on how to control his feelings.

“(Brittany) is really good at helping you look at things from a different perspective,” he says.

He says he has learned to give everyone the benefit of the doubt all the time, and to empathize.

“They (PAN) talk to me about stuff you can do to help with your anger – simple breathing, relaxing and other things to calm down and clear your mind.”

It helps, he says, but only if you want it to help, and he does.

“I didn’t want to end up like anybody else in my family that I grew up with,” he says. “I’m not saying they’re bad, but I want to be able to help everybody all the time instead of just existing.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.bramptonguardian.com/news-story/6267155-first-nations-find-culturally-sensitive-support-at-peel-courthouse/>

## **First Nation students suffering from PTSD, school nurse tells inquest**

**Indigenous youth in Thunder Bay showing symptoms of 'early psychosis,' Mae Katt says**

By Jody Porter, [CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 10, 2016 12:42 PM ET Last Updated: Feb 10, 2016 2:36 PM ET



Students at Dennis Franklin Cromarty high school arrive in Thunder Bay from remote First Nations with a 'sub-culture of suicide,' according to a nurse at the school. (Martine Laberge/Radio-Canada)

Many First Nation teenagers who leave home to come to Thunder Bay, Ont., for high school are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), according to a high school nurse in the city.

Mae Katt testified on Tuesday at an inquest into the deaths of seven First Nations students who died in Thunder Bay between 2000 and 2011.

"In the last seven or eight years, we're seeing a lot more acute conditions of mental health and substance use," said Katt, who has been serving remote First Nations as a nurse for more than 30 years.



The students exhibit symptoms of PTSD including excessive worry, sleeplessness, headaches and "early psychosis" such as "auditory hallucinations — hearing voices," Katt said.



Mae Katt is a nurse at Dennis Franklin Cromarty First Nations High School in Thunder Bay who says students soothe their feelings with drugs and alcohol when feeling low. (Mae Katt/Twitter)

The nurse attributes the mental illness to "25 years of a suicide crisis that never got addressed" in northern Ontario's First Nations.

There have been more than 500 suicides among the approximately 45,000 First Nations people who live in the region in that time, Katt said.

The current generation of students is the first to be raised in the "sub-culture of suicide," where their parents use drugs to cope with unresolved trauma, grief and loss, she explained.

"Adults are not doing drugs by choice. If you look at what hasn't been done in the north, no one has invested to stop the suicide crisis," Katt noted.

"Students tell me: if you really want to help us, help our home communities," the nurse told the inquest.

## **Nurse says students feel 'devalued'**

But life in the city isn't easy for the students, either, according to Katt.

She said students talk to the school nurses about feeling "devalued" in Thunder Bay, adding that the "devaluing is related to their race" in a city where "no one really knows who they are."

"We try to make them strong to try to make them understand they shouldn't be treated the way they're treated," Katt explained.

The nurses' efforts don't always work and when students "feel pretty low, their reaction is poor-decision making," she said. "They soothe their feelings through drugs and alcohol."

Dennis Franklin Cromarty First Nations High School, where Katt works, started a suboxone treatment program five years ago for students who are addicted to opioids.

Katt said 50 students have taken part in the program and 11 have graduated.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/first-nations-ptsd-thunder-bay-1.3441787>

## **Indigenous youth across Canada take RCMP workshop in Regina**

**Police officers and the teenagers hope to return to their communities better equipped to tackle issues**

CBC News Posted: Feb 10, 2016 6:45 PM CT Last Updated: Feb 10, 2016 6:45 PM CT



Indigenous teens meet with the RCMP to discuss issues in their communities. (CBC)

Indigenous teens from across Canada learned how to improve their communities at the RCMP training academy in Regina. It was part of the Youth Leadership workshop.

Alysha Wilson, 16, was at the training, wanting to find ways to deal with the alcohol problem in their community, Cambridge Bay, Nunavut.

"Spousal abuse, elder abuse, sexual abuse — alcohol abuse is probably the main factor," she said.

The teens came accompanied by a police officer from their local community. Police say it's important to have a young person as a resource, because they're able to tell the police what they see.

"We're not always in the schools," said Constable Mackenzie McGuffin. "So we don't see exactly what's going on or we don't see what happens when the youth are hanging out together. But they basically have a better eye on what the issues are for youth in the community."

Both the police officers and the teenagers hope to return to their communities better equipped to tackle issues.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/indigenous-youth-rcmp-workshop-1.3443082>

## Aboriginal Education & Youth

### **Inuit role models promote higher learning**

**"It's important for me that my children and grandchildren can live their dreams"**

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, February 05, 2016 - 10:00 am



Raigelee Alorut, originally from Iqaluit, is a university graduate living in Toronto. (IMAGE COURTESY OF COU)



Cardiac surgeon Donna May Kimmaliardjuk is currently doing her residency at the University of Ottawa's Heart Institute. (IMAGE COURTESY OF COU)

Raigelee Alorut was late in beginning her university studies, but today, Alorut has become a spokesperson for an Ontario campaign that encourages Indigenous people to pursue higher education.

The Council of Ontario Universities, a coalition of 20 publicly-funded universities across the province, launched a campaign earlier this week called "Let's Take Our Future Further."

The campaign includes the stories of 13 Indigenous students across the province, including two Inuit, who are encouraging other Inuit to consider a post-secondary education.

Alorut, originally from Iqaluit, has lived for many years in Toronto, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Aboriginal Studies. At 51, she calls herself a “late starter,” but adds that it’s never too late to go back to school.

“As a mature student and grandmother, it was really tough,” Alorut said. “I was overwhelmed by the workload because I didn’t know how to write essays or reports when I arrived on campus. I suddenly had to study hard and read a lot of books, which was not something that I was used to.”

But she persevered, in large part she said thanks to support from a student counsellor and the University of Toronto’s First Nations House.

Alorut is currently working as an Inuktitut instructor and interpreter, but soon plans to return to university to do graduate studies in education.

She hopes her hard work has also served as an inspiration to a younger generation.

“It is time that my grandchildren take these steps and be the future of the new generation,” she said. “It’s important for me that my children and grandchildren can live their dreams.”

Alongside Alorut, Canada’s first Inuk cardiac surgeon is also featured in COU’s new campaign. Donna May Kimmaliardjuk, whose mother hails from Chesterfield Inlet, is currently doing her residency at the University of Ottawa’s Heart Institute.

“I feel very fortunate that I’ve received a great deal of encouragement from my family in pursuing my goals,” Kimmaliardjuk said in a video posted to the campaign website.

“I have met so many great people and learned so much. These are things I would have missed out on if I had chosen to stay at home and to take a more comfortable road.”

There are about 6,500 Indigenous students enrolled in Ontario universities, and thousands more alumni.

There aren’t statistics showing where Nunavummiut go to university when they decide to enroll, but with only a handful of university-level programs available in the territory, most post-graduate students are forced to study outside of Nunavut.

The Government of Nunavut recently awarded a contract to an independent firm to explore the feasibility of building a territorial university.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit\\_role\\_models\\_promote\\_higher\\_earning/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit_role_models_promote_higher_earning/)

## **Educator identifies funding gaps for First Nations students in Thunder Bay**

**No funding source for residence 'to keep our students safe', NNEC director Norma Kejick says**

By Jody Porter, CBC News Posted: Feb 05, 2016 6:50 AM ET Last Updated: Feb 05, 2016 2:47 PM ET



Dennis Franklin Cromarty high school receives about \$2,000 less per student in tuition from the federal government than the public high school in Sioux Lookout, according to the Northern Nishnawbe Education Council executive director. (Jody Porter/CBC)

Limited funding creates challenges for First Nations schools and their students, the executive director of the Northern Nishnawbe Education Council told jurors on Thursday at the inquest into the deaths of First Nations students in Thunder Bay, Ont.

The inquest is examining the deaths of seven students from remote First Nations who died while attending high school in the city between 2000 and 2011.

"It's going to take all of us in this room, everyone who is represented here, to make this place safer for students," Norma Kejick said. The education council she directs operates Dennis Franklin Cromarty (DFC) high school in Thunder Bay.

Kejick's testimony included a review of the financial statements of the council.

DFC is running an accumulated deficit of more than a million dollars since it opened in 2000, she said.



Northern Nishnawbe Education Council executive director Norma Kejick says 'it's going to take all of us' to keep First Nations students safe in Thunder Bay. (iamindigenous.blogspot.ca)

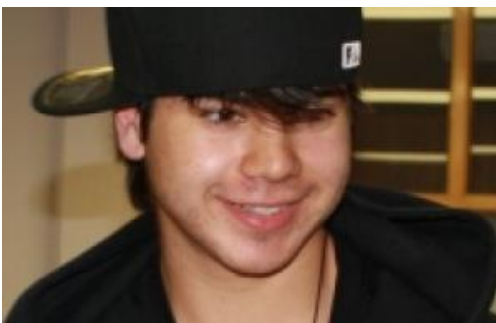
"We're always spending more money than we have," Kejick said.

According to Kejick's testimony the federal government provides the education council with approximately \$2,000 less per student at Dennis Franklin Cromarty school than is provided for First Nations students who attend a public high school in Sioux Lookout.

To preserve funding for student services, salaries have been frozen for all staff with the education council since 2007, she said.

The top salary for a teacher at Dennis Franklin Cromarty school is \$74,000, Kejick testified, adding the same teacher with a public board would make \$98,000.

The government also provides the education council with about \$6,600 per student living away from home to pay for room and board and transportation, Kejick said.



DFC student Daniel Levac was killed outside a movie theatre in Thunder Bay in 2014.

Not all of the students at Dennis Franklin Cromarty school are eligible for that funding, but the school provides equal services to everyone, she said.

There is no funding available for travel at any time other than Christmas and the end of the school year, Kejick said.

But the education council feels it's important for students to return to their families at March Break, so it pays for that travel as well, she said. Flights to the northern communities can cost up to \$1,000 per person.

Unexpected expenses also come up, Kejick said.

When student Daniel Levac was killed in 2014, the education council spent thousands of dollars to send 39 students from his home community back to Sachigo Lake for the funeral; to host memorial service at the school and to provide additional mental health supports for staff and students, she said.

"I have no emergency fund," she said.

Currently students live with boarding parents in Thunder Bay. There is also no federal funding for a student residence because it would be built off-reserve, Kejick said.

"I do think in order to keep our students safe, we need a residence," she said. "We need to know where our students are."

An earlier plan to build a residence on the Confederation College grounds with the help of Wasaya Airways fell apart, she said.

The education council is now hoping to build a 50-room dormitory on property right beside Dennis Franklin Cromarty school.

"We're looking at other options for how we can make this happen," Kejick said.

Kejick said she didn't want to leave the inquest with the impression that "it's all dark clouds."

More than 240 students have graduated from Dennis Franklin Cromarty school since it opened in 2000, she said.

"Would they have graduated if not for our school?" she asked.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/educator-identifies-funding-gaps-for-first-nations-students-in-thunder-bay-1.3434326>

## **B.C. completion certificates restricting aboriginal graduation rates curbed**

**Only students identified as having special needs will be eligible for Evergreen Certificate**

CBC News Posted: Feb 05, 2016 1:51 PM PT Last Updated: Feb 05, 2016 2:49 PM PT





Low expectations of aboriginal students has been identified as part of the racist education environment that sets children up to fail. (CBC )

B.C. schools will no longer be able to award Evergreen completion certificates to high school students who do not have a special needs designation and Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) in place.

The change, announced Friday by Education Minister Mike Bernier, follows November's damning auditor general's report, which identified low expectations of aboriginal youth as contributing to poor graduation rates.

"Educators need to expect that all aboriginal students will graduate," B.C.'s auditor general, Carol Bellringer said at the time, underlining the fact that "low expectations" are also part of a systemic racist environment that needs to change.

The Evergreen Certificate is a completion certificate issued to some special needs students. It is not equivalent to a Dogwood Diploma and is not generally sufficient for post-secondary direct entry programs.

Today's announcement, restricting the issuing of Evergreen Certificates, is a direct response to Bellringer's report, which recorded a graduation rate of 62 per cent among aboriginal students, far below the province's stated target of 85 per cent graduating by 2015.

In 10 B.C. districts, the rate was below 50 per cent.

"All students in B.C. deserve the very best education we can provide and we are delivering to help ensure our First Nations students have equal opportunity to succeed," Education Minister Mike Bernier said in a statement Friday.

B.C. Teachers Federation spokesman Glen Hansman welcomed the changes, noting that there was still work to be done, "to address systemic racism faced by First Nations learners and ensure that the resources, services, and funding are put in place to ensure their success."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/bc-evergreen-certificates-graduation-aboriginal-education-1.3436172>

# BC's only Aboriginal Focus School getting good marks from parents

by RENEE BERNARD

Posted Feb 4, 2016 11:39 pm PST

## **The Aboriginal Focus School Vancouver, BC** A Community Research Report



(Courtesy Report on Aboriginal Focus School)

VANCOUVER (NEWS 1130) – BC's only Aboriginal Focus School is getting good marks from parents.

A new study has been released, looking into the four-year-old public school's accomplishments and areas that need improvement.

The school is located at Macdonald elementary, at Hastings and Victoria. It's offered as a choice school by the Vancouver School Board.

Scott Neufeld is a SFU Masters student in social psychology who is one of three people who worked on the study.

He says the school has succeeded in fostering pride among its aboriginal students. But, perhaps ironically, parents told the researchers they wanted even more aboriginal cultural content in the classroom.

Perhaps more importantly, the researchers talked with parents whose kids don't attend the school, to get a sense of how the outside community perceives the school. Many parents weren't aware of the school, while others were under the impression it was designed solely for aboriginals.

The school has 50 students, one-fifth of whom are non-aboriginals.

“Contact between members of different groups in a supportive environment like this school helps promote tolerance and respect between the groups. It promotes better relationships between aboriginal and non-aboriginal students,” says Neufeld, explaining the benefits for non-aboriginal students.

But he does believe the school board needs to do more to help boost enrolment.

“To develop a more effective way of promoting the program. To develop a more effective way of integrating the kind of aboriginal content parents were hoping for.”

With the future of some under-capacity schools in Vancouver in question, the Aboriginal Focus School won't be closing anytime soon. Last fall, parents won a five-year guarantee from the school board that it won't face closure.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.news1130.com/2016/02/04/bcs-only-aboriginal-focus-school-getting-good-marks-from-parents/>

## Anti-racist approach to education essential to address experience of indigenous teachers and students



Elizabeth Gouthro, right, of the Calgary Board of Education was recognized by Indspire for her commitment to indigenous students. (courtesy Calgary Board of Education)

Learning can be a transformative experience, whether it's at the elementary school or university level. But what is often overlooked is how our education system doesn't account for the unique experiences of indigenous students and teachers.

Elizabeth Gouthro, the director of learning with the Calgary Board of Education, has become an ally to that city's indigenous community by making sure indigenous youth receive the best education possible.

Last year, she received an award for her efforts — a Partner in Indigenous Education award from Indspire, a non-profit organization that invests in the education of indigenous people.

"There's a gap, a definite gap. Our public school system has not been a place where our aboriginal students have been successful," Gouthro explained.

She added that in order for young students to succeed, needs must be addressed early.



Verna St. Denis is a professor in educational foundations at the University of Saskatchewan. (courtesy University of Saskatchewan)

"When we give them that early intervention and that time early on, we have been able to close the gap between our aboriginal and non-aboriginal students," she said.

One of the ways Calgary's school board is improving the learning experience for indigenous students is by incorporating culturally sensitive learning practices — making sure indigenous content is in the curriculum, but also ensuring the way it is taught is considerate of cultural differences.

"Aboriginal students, I would say generally, their culture really impacts how they learn," Gouthro said.

"I think aboriginal people look at a very holistic way of learning," she explained.

"Looking at taking care of the mind, the body, the spirit and the heart all at once. And so as we work with aboriginal children, we have to consider that."

## **Who teaches our teachers?**

Our teachers can have a lasting impact on how our youth perceive the world, but how a teacher teaches can impact whether or not a student develops a love of learning.

Verna St. Denis, a professor from the Department of Educational Foundations at the University of Saskatchewan, believes tackling the attitudes and misconceptions teachers might have about indigenous people is key to ensure a positive learning environment for indigenous students.

"I spend a lot of my time in my teaching disrupting white supremacy," St. Denis said.

"My hope is that when we get to the end of the class, the [teachers] will be open to learning and appreciating indigenous knowledge."

She teaches anti-racist approaches to education to the next generation of teachers.

St. Denis said while she would love to see more indigenous teachers working in schools, she recognizes that they are still a minority. Because of this, fostering ally relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous teachers is essential.

"We need that coalition from our non-indigenous colleagues to advance changes within education that would encourage the success of [indigenous] children," she said.

After years of working with other teachers, St. Denis knows that the attitudes of non-indigenous teachers can really sour the experiences of their indigenous colleagues.

"I think for me in my own experience, it's the paternalism, it's that real deep belief that they know best," St. Denis offered.

"It's really good when our allies are willing to acknowledge that they don't quite understand the direction that we want to go but are willing to take our leadership."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/building-an-ally-non-indigenous-people-share-their-stories-of-bridge-building-1.3430628/anti-racist-approach-to-education-essential-to-address-experience-of-indigenous-teachers-and-students-1.3434523>

## **First Nations welcome new rules restricting Evergreen graduation certificates**

Only students with special needs will qualify under the new guidelines

BY KEVIN GRIFFIN, VANCOUVER SUN FEBRUARY 5, 2016



The announcement about tougher rules for Evergreen certificates was made by Education Minister Mike Bernier, above, at the Chief Joe Mathias Centre on the Squamish Reserve in North Vancouver.

New rules that make it tougher for B.C. schools to issue high school graduation certificates should help the education system focus more attention on the needs of indigenous students, a leader in aboriginal education said Friday.

Tyrone McNeil, president of the First Nations Education Steering Committee, welcomed the announcement by the provincial government to only allow schools to issue Evergreen Certificates to students with special needs who have an individual education plan.

In B.C. there are two high school graduation programs: the Evergreen, which was meant for special needs students, and the Dogwood certificate, which is the diploma issued to most students who complete Grade 12.

Some schools stream aboriginal students into non-academic programs so they graduate with Evergreen Certificates. The new rules are expected to come into force for the start of the next school year.

McNeil said the change means addressing “systemic bias” against aboriginal students in the education system.

“It allows us as First Nations to leverage this announcement,” McNeil said. “It will allow us to reshape the conversations between our communities and school boards to make sure they’re paying attention to our kids and that all our kids receive the education they rightfully deserve.”

The announcement was made by Education Minister Mike Bernier at the Chief Joe Mathias Centre on the Squamish Reserve in North Vancouver.

The change comes at the request of the B.C. School Trustees Association, the B.C. Teachers Federation and the FNEESC. Founded in 1992, the FNEESC is a First Nations controlled group that focuses on advancing quality education for indigenous students.

Restricting the use of Evergreen Certificates was also a recommendation of the auditor general in a November 2015 report on the education of aboriginal students.

While there was no new money included in the announcement, McNeil said that should come in time as the change works its way through the education system.



“Now everybody is going to have to pay more attention to our kids from Grade 1 on up,” McNeil said in an interview.

At the moment, he said, only one in 67 non-Aboriginal students who graduate do so on with an Evergreen Certificate; for aboriginal students, the number is one in seven.

“It’s part of systemic bias against First Nations — bias based on either low expectations or no expectations,” he said.

“There is not enough impetus by teachers and school staff to recognize that our kids have the skills to graduate through the Dogwood but it easier to shift them off to an alternative program and forget about them. That’s what the system has done for too long.”

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.vancouversun.com/life/first+nations+welcome+rules+restricting+evergreen+graduation+certificates/11701100/story.html>

## Diploma changes to boost graduation

JANE SEYD / NORTH SHORE NEWS  
FEBRUARY 7, 2016 12:00 AM



Education Minister Mike Bernier announces changes to who will be eligible for an Evergreen Certificate at the Chief Joe Mathias Centre in North Vancouver Feb. 5. photo Mike Wakefield, NS News

Minister of Education Mike Bernier says the province will push to make sure First Nations students graduate high school with a dogwood diploma.

Bernier made the announcement Friday on Squamish Nation lands in North Vancouver, after being greeted by a traditional welcoming song.

Bernier said in the past decade, too many aboriginal kids have been receiving evergreen certificates – certificates of completion that don’t count as high school graduation – instead of regular diplomas.



Evergreen certificates were originally introduced 10 years ago in B.C. as a way for special needs students – such as those with profound autism – to be recognized with their peers for completing school.

But in recent years, both the auditor general and aboriginal leaders have pointed to a disproportionate use of evergreen certificates for aboriginal students.

“How many of them were truly for special needs? How many of them were just because they didn’t get the extra push they needed to get a dogwood?” said Bernier.

According to ministry statistics, about four per cent of aboriginal Grade 12 students receive evergreen certificates compared to about one per cent of non-aboriginal Grade 12 students.

That’s resulted in both a lower graduation rate among First Nations students and aboriginal students facing limitations in pursuing post-secondary training and education, said Tyrone McNeil, president of the First Nations Education Steering Committee.

Graduation rates for aboriginal students in the province are about 63 per cent compared to 84 per cent for the school population as a whole. Graduation rates in North Vancouver are similar, with 59 per cent of First Nations students graduating compared to 83 per cent of students overall.

Bernier said he’s heard too many stories of First Nations students being encouraged to take easier subjects and being told they’ll still get an evergreen certificate. Often families haven’t understood that means their child won’t formally graduate high school, he said.

Bernier said from now on, evergreen certificates will only be available to students with recognized special needs and individual education plans.

McNeil called the use of evergreen certificates part of a “systemic bias against First Nations. It was a really easy out for high schools to take our kids out of the academic stream and put them in the alternate stream,” he said.

He called this practice “racism of low expectations.”

“We have to accept that outcomes for our kids aren’t where any of us want them to be,” said McNeil. “Let’s get together and do something about it.”

About 11 per cent of the public school population is aboriginal.

John Lewis, North Vancouver schools superintendent, Christie Sacré, chair of the North Vancouver Board of Education and Brad Baker, district administrator of aboriginal education, all attended Friday's announcement.

- See more at: <http://www.nsnews.com/news/diploma-changes-to-boost-graduation-1.2167279#sthash.q63EKhgi.dpuf>

## **Don't just give equal funds to child welfare for First Nations children. Decolonize it.**

BY

**LAURA LANDERTINGER**

| FEBRUARY 8, 2016



In a long-awaited ruling, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal finally confirmed what many have known for decades. The federal government provides less funding for child welfare services for First Nations children living on reserves and in the Yukon than it does for non-Indigenous child populations. Declaring this a case of racial discrimination, the tribunal ordered Ottawa to "cease the discriminatory practice and take measures to redress and prevent it."

While taking some time to celebrate this victorious outcome, we should nonetheless understand that this victory is double-edged. It obscures the bigger picture. From its inception, the child welfare system has never worked in favour of Indigenous peoples. On the contrary, as a supplement to and later substitute for the Indian Residential School System, the child welfare system has wreaked havoc on generations of Indigenous peoples. And it continues to do so in the present.

Indigenous children continue to be removed en masse. The rate at which Indigenous children enter the child welfare system has been on the rise ever since the now infamous "Sixties Scoop." In 2011, according to Statistics Canada, despite constituting only seven per cent of the overall child population, almost half (48.1 per cent) of the children under the age of 14 in foster care across Canada were Indigenous children.

Equally alarming is the fact that the death toll for Indigenous children in child welfare custody is also more pronounced than for their non-Indigenous peers. The problem -- the large-scale removal of Indigenous children through the Canadian settler state -- should not be reduced to one of unequal funding. This issue is larger than merely rectifying a discriminatory practice within a seemingly egalitarian system.

Child welfare laws manage the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the settler state. This relationship normalizes the settler society's position over Indigenous peoples. Through this framework, the Canadian state possesses the unquestioned rights to enter

Indigenous communities, judge the welfare of their children, and remove them as they see fit. The leading factors that cause Indigenous children to be removed from their homes are the very material conditions (such as poverty) that are a direct outcome of colonialism past and present.

Even as we remember that child welfare is a central part of the ongoing colonial management of Indigenous peoples, it is still immediately necessary to overhaul the funding schemes Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada uses to fund First Nations Child and Family Service (FNCFS) Agencies and child and family services in Ontario. For one, as substantiated by the tribunal, the current model consistently provides less funding to First Nations children than non-Indigenous children. Secondly, the funding that is provided is directed towards child apprehension rather than prevention services (such as family support), resulting in higher levels of institutionalization of First Nations children. Two very good reasons to do away with it.

Why we need a court order to rectify such blatant inequality should give us pause. It should be noted that these dynamics are not news to the federal government. Already in the 1980s, the Canadian Council on Social Development identified the constitutional jurisdictional split between the federal government and the provinces and territories (which the current FNCFS funding model is a result of) as causing uneven social services for First Nations on reserves.

And prior to the implementation of the FNCFS funding schemes, Indigenous peoples informed the federal government that if it were implemented as suggested, their children would be funneled into child welfare institutions due to its prioritization of child apprehension over prevention services. The federal government proceeded anyway. This long-standing impulse to discriminate will not go away with one court order for the simple reason that it begins in a colonial structure. Equal funding within a fundamentally unjust system, cannot lead to justice.

Strategic improvements to the child welfare system are certainly necessary in the interim as they may lessen the detrimental impact the child welfare system has on Indigenous peoples. But for the long-term, let us think beyond such narrow definitions of justice. If the problem is colonialism, then the answer is decolonization. Solutions that are disconnected from Indigenous peoples' sovereignty and self-determination can only go so far, and worse of all, may even enable us to believe that we have done our best.

Reacting to the Human Rights Tribunal decision, Justice Minister Wilson-Raybould proposes a nation-to-nation relationship as a possible way forward. What such a relationship can look like is something we need to think about.

*Laura Landertinger is a PhD candidate in the department of Social Justice Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto. Her work examines the intersections of race, gender and settler colonialism in Canada, focusing in particular on the institution of child welfare.*

**Direct Link:** <http://rabble.ca/blogs/bloggers/views-expressed/2016/02/dont-just-give-equal-funds-to-child-welfare-first-nations-chi>

## **Summit on First Nations education in Timmins this week**

By Sarah Moore

Sunday, February 7, 2016 11:10:40 EST PM



More than 300 Omushkego education authorities will be travelling to Timmins next week to take part in the 25th annual Great Moon Gathering at Northern College.

The long-standing event brings together educators from all eight of the Omushkego Education Authorities and surrounding communities to engage in professional development activities.

The conference always takes place in February to coincide with the Kishay Pisim Moon (The Great Moon) which is the coldest and final moon of the winter season in the cycle of life calendar of the Mushkegowuk Territory.

It is a culturally significant time that reflects the end of winter and the beginning of a new life cycle and traditionally, is a period of survival and storytelling.

It has also become an annual professional development time for educators to gather and share insights, resources, and opportunities.

“Some people may or may not be aware that our schools don't get nearly as much funding as provincial schools,” explained Irene Tomatuk, Director of Omushkego Education. “So we've had to be very creative, and this gives them an opportunity to participate in professional development and have an opportunity to network because we don't sit under one education board, everyone has an education authority within each of their communities.”

The event will begin with a sunrise ceremony at Northern Collge on Thursday, Feb. 11 followed by an opening ceremony for the conference.

The workshop sessions will begin on Thursday afternoon followed by a speech by Dr. Shirley Cheechoo, a residential school survivor, artist, filmmaker and the Chancellor of Brock University.

There will also be a celebration of initiatives that afternoon, focusing on the educational advancements being made in Mushkegowuk communities.

“One of the things we like to acknowledge when we have the Great Moon Gathering is the initiatives we have happening in our region because our schools are so different than the provincial schools,” she said. “We have a program called the First Nations Student Success Program that has really grown for us in the last couple years and some other initiatives that we'll be celebrating. So we're celebrating not just our schools but our students and communities, as well.”

Another initiative that can be attributed to the work done at the gatherings these past 25 years is the implementation of aggregate data about the progress of First Nations students.

These students don't participate in standardized testing such as EQAO and others administered in the public school system, so the implementation of a system to collect data on the achievements of their students has served as a valuable benchmarking tool.

“We have something that we can compare to within our own region, and we're starting to see some of those gaps close,” Tomatuk said. “We still have work to do, but now we have the data that is demonstrating there is progress in the work that we're doing.”

Thursday evening will commence with a dinner, the screening of three films (including one on Treaty 9) and a roundtable dance.

Friday's activities will also commence with a sunrise ceremony and include more workshops and a presentation by Dr. Jean Clinton, a clinical professor in the department of psychiatry and behavioural neurosciences at McMaster University.

There will also be focus groups, workshops and panel discussions held on each day of the conference which will provide a venue to discuss traditional education, values, and strategies to support students engagement and success.

“A really strong focus is on the revitalization of culture, language and student voice and what our students want to see in our schools, so we're trying to reflect that through our educators,” Tomatuk added.

Tomatuk said she is looking forward to the upcoming event and the partnership between the Omushkego Education Authorities and Northern College.

“It's great that we now have winter road accessibility to get in and get out of Timmins, and it's an exciting opportunity for us to work together,” she said.

The conference will be held at Northern College Feb. 11 and Feb. 12. There will be an extended bus service provided by the Ontario Northland to facilitate travel for those coming from outside of Timmins.

While registration for the event is now closed, the organizers have created a waiting list for anyone interested in attending that missed the registration period. There are no guarantees, but organizers say spots could open up and encourage those interested to contact [gmg2016@mushkegowuk.ca](mailto:gmg2016@mushkegowuk.ca) for more information.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.timminspress.com/2016/02/07/summit-on-first-nations-education-in-timmins-this-week>

## **Indigenous students share thoughts on new Gordon Oakes Redbear Student Centre**

**New Douglas Cardinal-designed building at the U of S home to Aboriginal Students' Centre**

CBC News Posted: Feb 07, 2016 7:33 PM CT Last Updated: Feb 07, 2016 7:33 PM CT



The Gordon Oakes Redbear Student Centre is home to the Aboriginal Students' Centre and a gathering place for anyone on campus. (Eric Anderson/CBC)

The Gordon Oakes Redbear Student Centre has officially opened at the University of Saskatchewan.

It is home to the Aboriginal Students' Centre and a gathering place for anyone on campus.



The 1,884 square-metre building was designed by renowned Métis and Blackfoot architect Douglas Cardinal and reflects indigenous teachings and traditions. (CBC)

The 1,884 square-metre building was designed by renowned Métis and Blackfoot architect Douglas Cardinal and reflects indigenous teachings and traditions.



Three indigenous U of S students share their thoughts on the new building.

## Feather Pewapisconias



Feather Pewapisconias says that the new building is a positive step towards reconciliation. (Eric Anderson/CBC)

"I think it's an opportunity for us to come together as indigenous and non-indigenous people," Pewapisconias said.

She added it's a positive step towards reconciliation and showing indigenous students that they matter to the school.

"To have all these people together in one spot is really significant and really shows the importance that our indigenous population has at the University of Saskatchewan," she said.

## Regan Ratt-Misponas



Regan Ratt-Misponas says it shows 'we are all Treaty people'. (Eric Anderson/CBC)



"The feel of it now makes for a much more open space for diversity and a much more open space for people to come and learn about such things as the medicine wheel," Ratt-Misponas said.

The political studies and indigenous studies student is from the Lac La Ronge Indian Band and is a member of the community of Pinehouse.

"It just gives us a feel that we are all welcome and the saying is true 'we are all Treaty people,'" he said.

## **Dana Carriere**



Dana Carriere says the new building will lead to more indigenous faculty, leadership, and administrative staff at the University of Saskatchewan.

"The students centre has been a long time coming," Carriere said. "The building means different things to different people. To me it means success and it means leadership."

As a graduate student, Carriere said it is important for undergraduate students to see further education as an option.

"To have indigenous undergraduate students and indigenous graduate students in the same space, I think that's going to do wonderful things for the university because I think we need more indigenous graduate students," she said.

She added that way, in the future, there will be more indigenous faculty, leadership, and administration.

"It will start with the conversations in this building," she said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/3-indigenous-students-on-new-gordon-oakes-redbear-student-centre-1.3438024>

## Indigenous leaders say Jesuit school in indigenous area of Winnipeg reminiscent of residential schools

**THE CANADIAN PRESS** | February 9, 2016 3:53 PM ET



### GONZAGA MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Gonzaga Middle School (GMS) will provide an enhanced, holistic, Manitoba Education approved, co-educational, culturally sensitive middle school education to Grade 6-8 students from low-income families in the Point Douglas and North East Downtown neighbourhoods of inner-city Winnipeg. It will use the unique middle school educational framework and best practices from Jesuit Nativity model schools and the Nativity/Miguel Coalition of Schools, adapting them to the community served in Winnipeg.

GMS seeks to develop "men and women for others" while preparing students for success in high school and post-secondary study. It will strive to graduate students who are loving, intellectually competent, open to growth, spiritually alive and committed to doing justice.

GMS will support its students of all cultural and faith backgrounds in their growth toward becoming hopeful, confident, morally responsible leaders for love and service of their families and communities.

National Post file photoGonzaga Middle School is being criticized by indigenous leaders as too reminiscent of residential schools. They say a private Catholic school in a largely indigenous neighbourhood is a bad idea and goes against recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

WINNIPEG — A couple of indigenous leaders are speaking out against a new, private Jesuit school set to open in September in Winnipeg's north end, saying it is too reminiscent of a residential school.

Gonzaga Middle School aims to support academically gifted students with longer hours and smaller class sizes.

It also plans to remove barriers for low-income and academically gifted students between Grades 6 and 8 by offering free education.

It's painful, the wounds are still too fresh

But the activists say a private Catholic school in a largely indigenous neighbourhood is a bad idea and goes against recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

They went to the Winnipeg School Division on Monday night and asked for support.

Larry Morrisette, executive director of Ogijiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin, an organization that works with youth in gangs, and James Favel have also written a letter to Pope Francis asking him to intervene.



John Woods / National Post  
Larry Morrisette, executive director of Ogijiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin Inc., in Winnipeg's north end on Dec. 19, 2007.

Favel says the school is already causing cracks in the community.

“It’s divided us into those who want it and those who don’t,” he says. “It’s painful, the wounds are still too fresh.”

School board vice-chairwoman Sherri Rollins says the board can’t intervene with private school matters, but it can be an ally and listen to community concerns.

In a statement online, Gonzaga Middle School Principal Tom Lussier says the school does not want to repeat mistakes of the past.

He says Gonzaga endorses and encourages the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and adds that Gonzaga will teach students about the legacy of residential schools, and the Catholic Church’s role in their development and operation.

Vivian Ketchum, a former residential school student, attended Monday’s meeting and says she will never send her children to Gonzaga.

“Now I can’t speak my language,” she says. “I’m afraid of my own culture. I was taught fear. That’s what these type of schools teach, fear.”

Other indigenous leaders have come out in support of the school.

Manitoba Treaty Commissioner James Wilson says Gonzaga will give indigenous students opportunities to succeed academically.

Niigaan Sinclair, an indigenous studies professor at the University of Manitoba, is on the school's board of directors while Point Douglas MLA Kevin Chief was on its advisory committee.

**Direct Link:** <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/indigenous-leaders-say-jesuit-school-in-indigenous-area-of-winnipeg-reminiscent-of-residential-schools>

## **Six Nations Polytechnic now offers indigenous language degree**

**Students to be able to get a degree in Ogwehoweh (Cayuga and Mohawk) languages, not just diploma**

CBC News Posted: Feb 08, 2016 3:46 PM ET Last Updated: Feb 08, 2016 3:46 PM ET



Ontario's Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities announced that Six Nations Polytechnic Aboriginal Institute will be able to grant a degree, not just a diploma, in Ogwehoweh languages. (Six Nations Polytechnic)

Students will now be able to receive a Bachelor of Arts degree, not just a diploma, in Ogwehoweh languages from the Six Nations Polytechnic Aboriginal Institute in Ohsweken, the province announced today.

It's the first time the province has allowed an Aboriginal Institute, which are run and governed completely by indigenous leaders, to offer a degree program.

The news lines up with a recommendation from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission — that post-secondary institutions create degree programs in indigenous languages.

Reza Moridi, the province's Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, says the change allows several things to happen:

- Helps promote and protect Ogwehoweh (Cayuga and Mohawk) languages.
- Makes it possible for students to complete their degree at one institution, closer to home.
- Helps students build on language and cultural knowledge and skills.
- Expands student opportunities for jobs.

"Language preservation and protection are at the core values of Six Nations Polytechnic," said Rebecca Jamieson, the school's president, in a press release.

The current diploma program has been offered in partnership with McMaster University.

In the below photo, Six Nations Polytechnic president Rebecca Jamieson is holding a small replica of a drum. Ministers Reza Moridi and David Zimmer are holding a replica of the Covenant Chain wampum belt given by the school to "commemorate the friendships created," according to Chelsey Johnson, communications director for the school.

Rick Hill, in the middle, is a senior coordinator at the Deyohaha:ge Indigenous Knowledge Centre, and he was holding a replica of the Two Row wampum belt.



Province and school officials attended an event Monday to announce the new degree program. From left to right: Dave Levac, MPP; Rebecca Jamieson, President of Six Nations Polytechnic; Reza Moridi, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities; David Zimmer, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs; Rick Hill, Deyohahage Coordinator; Ava Hill, Chief, Six Nations Elected Council; Tom Deer, Language Instructor. (Chelsey Johnson/Six Nations Polytechnic)

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/news/six-nations-polytechnic-now-offers-indigenous-language-degree-1.3438968>



# **Nova Scotia First Nations eye better child services on heels of ruling**

**Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found child welfare services on reserves received less funding than others**

By Joan Weeks, [CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 09, 2016 4:31 PM AT Last Updated: Feb 09, 2016 4:41 PM AT



Eskasoni community members gathered for a march against drugs in November, followed by a feast aimed at giving young hunters pride in their community. (Joan Weeks/CBC)

A recent human rights ruling means Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia could see an expansion of programs for aboriginal children and families.

"We were all overwhelmed and excited about the ruling," said Arlene Johnson, executive director of Mi'kmaq Family and Children's Services in Eskasoni. "For us, it means that we can expand on our services and we know that we will receive additional funding."

Last month, a Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found the federal government discriminates against First Nations children by granting up 38 per cent less funding to on-reserve child welfare services than is provided off reserve.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett has said the Liberal government agrees with the decision and pledged it would begin working with aboriginal groups to find solutions. The government said fixes will mean more money.

The additional money would mean Mi'kmaq Family and Children's Services, which delivers child welfare services to aboriginal reserves across the province, can provide culturally relevant programming for children and families, Johnson said.

All services, especially in prevention, have been underfunded, she said.

## **More prevention, less adversarial approaches**

Johnson said all the service's programs are to be culturally relevant, and include "the use of elders, the use of language, and to meet community needs."

One program currently in the works is called family group conferencing, she said.

It would "use less adversarial approaches in terms of diverting [people] away from court eventually. It's a process, family group conferencing, where we can include the family and the family is involved all through the decision making."

The agency is also working on its adoption program, Johnson said.

"We want it to be enriched with our Mi'kmaq culture and traditions. And it's basically about [children] understanding their identity, you know, being proud of their culture, understanding the culture by traditional learning."

She said she wants to see social and health services for Eskasoni families provided in their own community, instead of outside the community.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/human-rights-ruling-aboriginal-mi-k-maq-1.3440530>

## Aboriginal role model overcomes barriers to success

By: Heidi Ulrichsen - Sudbury Northern Life  
| Feb 09, 2016 - 4:05 PM |



Laurentian University graduate student Amy Shawanda (left) and associate vice-president of academic and indigenous programs Sheila Cote-Meek are featured in the Council of Ontario Universities' Let's Take Our Future Further Campaign. Photo by Heidi Ulrichsen.

LU administrator, grad student featured in new campaign

When Sheila Cote-Meek was a young girl growing up in Temagami, she felt she couldn't succeed.

The granddaughter of a residential school survivor, Cote-Meek faced extreme racism and bullying, and saw signs everywhere that Aboriginal people didn't finish school or move



onto post-secondary education.

When she was in Grade 8, though, she had a teacher that instilled in her a belief that she could achieve much more academically.

Cote-Meek went on to get her nursing degree, and later a master's of business administration and a PhD in sociology and equity studies.

For the past decade, she's been the associate vice-president of academic and indigenous programs at **Laurentian University**. She holds one of the most senior academic posts of any Aboriginal person in Ontario.

Cote-Meek is also one of 13 Aboriginal role models chosen for the Council of Academic Universities' **Let's Take Our Future Further Campaign**.

The campaign aims to celebrate the achievements and contributions of Aboriginal leaders and alumni at Ontario universities and to encourage current students to continue to pursue and complete their studies.

“There are more than 6,500 Aboriginal learners at Ontario universities and thousands of Aboriginal alumni who are contributing to Ontario's social, cultural and economic well-being,” said Jonathan Hamilton-Diabo, chair of the COU working group responsible for the initiative.

“We want Ontarians to celebrate that success and, now, Aboriginal learners who have blazed their own trail at university are encouraging others to do the same.”

Cote-Meek said she feels privileged to be featured in the campaign. She said one of her career goals has been to make other Aboriginal people feel welcome at university.

“We all know about the stories of residential schools, and the impact it had on that generation and subsequent generations,” she said.

“My grandfather went to the Spanish Residential School. There's a lot of hesitancy in our families to go to school because there's mistrust about what's going to happen.

“So my goal in going back and finishing a PhD was to look for ways to make universities a better place for indigenous students, so when they come to these kinds of places, they feel welcome.”

Amy Shawanda, who's set to graduate with her master's degree in indigenous relations from Laurentian in June, is also one of the 13 role models featured in the campaign.

The native of Wikwemikong on Manitoulin Island said she had great role models in her mother, who has a college degree, and her sister, who also has a master's degree.

A single mother, Shawanda said she also wants to be a role model for her son.

“On the sleepless nights and days I’ve cried, I have looked at my son and realized that I’m doing this for him,” she said in a biography included on the initiative's website.

Upon her graduation from Laurentian, Shawanda plans to continue her education, working towards her PhD at Trent University. She ultimately wants to change policies that affect Aboriginal people.

For example, for her master's degree, she's studying the policies that restrict smudging in health facilities in northeastern Ontario.

“Post-secondary education has had a huge impact on my life – it is where my healing journey began,” Shawanda said on the Future Further website.

“It helped me to find my identity, cultural teachings, and a connection to my language. It has also given me a great support system that has allowed me to teach my child about the traditional Anishinaabe way of life.

“Pursue your passion in life and transform your future – if you don’t go after what you want, you’ll never have it.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.northernlife.ca/news/localNews/2016/02/09-future-further-campaign-sudbury.aspx>

## Partnership highlights needs of Métis kids

By Eric MacKenzie

Tuesday, February 9, 2016 5:19:20 PST PM



With more than 1,000 Métis children in provincial care, a new collaboration between Métis Nation BC and the Adoptive Families Association of British Columbia is aiming to reduce that number.

The two organizations plan to work together on programming and services supporting both Métis and non-Métis families hoping to adopt Métis children after signing a memorandum of understanding on Tuesday.

“I think these kinds of formal arrangements with different cultural communities in B.C. are really, really critical to finding permanency for multicultural children who are in care,” said Mary Caros, communications manager for AFABC. “So I’m really excited about the relationship going forward (with MNBC).”

Although the specific details of programming have yet to be worked out, Caros said the partnership is intended to highlight the “unique cultural needs” of Métis children. There’s more to achieving permanency for adoptable children than just a safe and stable home – AFABC also looks to achieve “cultural permanency” in arrangements, which it defines as “continued, constant connection to culture and heritage regardless of what else is changing in a child or youth’s life.”

“Maintaining cultural connections for those children is really important – whether they’re Métis, from Cowichan Tribes, or whether they’re from Haiti or China,” said Caros. “So that’s a big part of what our organization does.”

Daniel Pitman, children and families minister for MNBC, said in a statement that “combining our efforts and experience to focus on Métis children and helping them to find permanent homes is tremendously valuable.”

**Direct Link:** <http://vancouver.24hrs.ca/2016/02/09/partnership-highlights-needs-of-metis-kids>

## Website highlights their success stories

Nugget Staff

Thursday, February 11, 2016 12:53:16 EST AM



St. Joseph-Scollard Hall students Angela Green, left, Haylee Kaspardlov and Jade Jackson, enjoy a "feast" Wednesday at Nipissing University. The feast was part of a celebration to kick off Future Further, a website project sponsored by Ontario universities

A website offering resource material specifically for aboriginal students is a “very important” initiative, according to the president of Nipissing University.

Mike DeGagne said the Future Further portal is different from other university websites in that it goes beyond the academic features of the university to give indigenous students a look at what is specifically available for them.

Until now, DeGagne said, there has been little information – and none in a central place – about what is available culturally.

“University is not just about learning,” DeGagne said. “It’s about developing as a whole person.”

The launch was celebrated Wednesday with a feast in the university's small cafeteria, with students from around the city taking part by celebrating aboriginal students and their accomplishments.

Nipissing student Autumn Varley said the website gives aboriginal students support that might have been missing, and an opportunity to look at aboriginal success stories.

“It’s important for aboriginal learners” to see how their culture is recognized at universities, she said, as well as how they can serve as role models for others.

Varley received her BA in history at the University of Ottawa before transferring to Nipissing to work on her master’s degree.

“When I was looking to go to university . . . I didn’t know what was available,” she said.

“This gives us a chance to compare and contrast what is there in the first year.”

The website, [www.futurefurther.ca](http://www.futurefurther.ca), offers profiles and videos of aboriginal role models and resource kits for aboriginal students who are considering attending an Ontario university.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.nugget.ca/2016/02/11/website-highlights-their-success-stories>

## **First Nations advocate opposes exclusion of voluntary placements in Manitoba CFS count**

**Cora Morgan, First Nations family advocate for the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, calls decision ridiculous**

CBC News Posted: Feb 11, 2016 10:05 AM CT Last Updated: Feb 11, 2016 10:42 AM CT



Cora Morgan, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs' advocate for First Nations children in care, said she doesn't believe the province is adjusting the way children in care are counted simply to level the playing field when compared to other provinces. (Jeff Stapleton/CBC)

A First Nations family advocate is questioning the province's decision to exclude children voluntarily placed in Child and Family Services care when counting the total number of kids in care.

News broke Wednesday that Manitoba is making the change, with government officials saying they are concerned the province is being unfairly compared to other provinces.

Cora Morgan, First Nations Family Advocate for the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, said the decision is "ridiculous."

"It's convenient leading into an election," she said.

Voluntary placement agreements between families and Manitoba's CFS are not voluntary at all, Morgan said.

"There's kind of this [idea] that's provided by [Manitoba's Minister of Family Services Kerri Irvin-Ross] that's, 'Oh, it's just a matter of going back and getting your children.' If I put my children in care for a month because I was really struggling ... there's no way I'm going to get those kids back easily as it's portrayed," she said.

Morgan said she works with a number of women who have "basically been blackmailed" into signing voluntary placement agreements.

"CFS has shown up at their door and said, 'You can either sign off on this voluntary placement agreement or we're going to apprehend your children and if you sign ... you're going to get more visitation with your children,'" Morgan said.

"It's CFS showing up at their door and giving them an ultimatum."

## **'I don't buy it'**

Irvin-Ross said the purpose of the adjustment is so Manitoba can be accurately compared to other provinces that don't count voluntary placement agreements in their overall totals of children in provincial care.

Morgan offered a curt response to the explanation: "I don't buy it."

Further, Morgan said she's seen women fight for years to regain custody of their children after they've signed voluntary placement agreements, forced to attend programming she said does not adequately address root causes that lead to CFS involvement in the first place.

"At the end of the day, there's just broad suggestions or recommendations that people have to do," she said, using one month of addictions counselling as an example.

"There's ample opportunity to do things that are preventative ... never mind just trying to fix the numbers so it doesn't look so bad."

Morgan said she is asking for changes that indigenous people in Canada have been requesting for years.

"[Kerri Irvin-Ross] talked about the provincial government and the federal government are ... looking at a new funding model," Morgan said.

"There's no mention of the inclusion of First Nations people in the design of the system, the design of the funding model. That's all we've always asked for, was to be able to be involved in making the decisions that affect our children."

Morgan insisted parents surrender all control over their children's lives when they voluntarily place them in CFS care.

"They don't have the ability to make decisions based on their children when they're in these voluntary placement agreements," she said.

"So, I can't understand why you wouldn't count those numbers because at the end of the day, the province has full control over these children."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/first-nations-child-family-services-manitoba-1.3443521>

## Aboriginal Health

### **Sexism, cronyism claims hit B.C. First Nations health agency as it receives billions in funding**

**BRIAN HUTCHINSON** | February 6, 2016 12:25 AM ET



a meeting with potential recruits, Doug Kelly, B.C. First Nations Health Council chairman, recounted that early in his career he had decided to hire nurses of “non-child-bearing age” only.

A letter describing “a culture of bullying, misogyny, sexualization of Aboriginal women, inequality and lateral violence” at a First Nations health-care system in British Columbia led to an extraordinary federal government audit — and to troubling conclusions made public this week.

The office of the Auditor General of Canada launched its probe after receiving a scathing four-page document from an anonymous source. The unsigned letter makes claims of serious misconduct in the three-year-old First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), based in West Vancouver.

According to the document, “a number of folks within the FNHA and others who have left the FNHA are increasingly disturbed by the behaviour of senior leadership.”

That won’t come as a total surprise to some health-care workers and government bureaucrats.

In December 2012, dozens of Vancouver-based Health Canada employees were called to a meeting in a local hotel. They were asked to consider joining a new organization, the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), which would assume responsibility for providing public health-care services to almost 160,000 First Nations people in the province.

It was an exciting initiative, the first of its kind in Canada. But after listening to comments made by the leader of a First Nations council responsible for overseeing the design of the new health authority, several potential recruits decided they wanted nothing to do with it.

At the meeting, Doug Kelly described his lengthy career as a band chief and aboriginal health-care executive, noting early in his career he had encountered a “problem” with his nurses: They would sometimes become pregnant and leave their employment.



To solve the “problem,” Kelly told his audience, he decided to hire nurses of “non-childbearing age” only.

“After that meeting, many of us decided to reject FNHA’s (job) offer,” says one former Health Canada worker. “We knew it could potentially be a toxic work environment.”

Health Canada bureaucrats were already raising concerns about the FNHA’s spending practices and its commitment to transparency.

According to government documents prepared in 2012 and obtained by the National Post, the FNHA had directed millions of dollars in start-up funds to programs that lacked clear objectives. Financial “discrepancies” and “differences” in accounting were also identified.

But the historic transfer proceeded on schedule. In late 2013, the FNHA assumed responsibility for providing health care to all First Nations people in B.C.

Under a tripartite agreement, it began receiving annual payments from Ottawa and the B.C. government that will total more than \$4.7 billion by 2023.

Then came allegations of sexist behaviour and “unfettered cronyism” in the organization.

Among the claims outlined in the anonymous document: “A senior leader was ‘strongly advised’ to hire female candidates based on looks and body types” and a “highly skilled Aboriginal leader with B.C. First Nations credibility was openly sexually harassed by a senior leader, with multiple witnesses present.”

The document also alleges “unprepared inexperienced unqualified people” received promotions in the FNHA, “based on people who they know or who they are in relation with.”

The Auditor General did not investigate the substance of the accusations; rather, it examined how the FNHA had responded to them.

Cases of potential conflict of interest were handled appropriately, the Auditor General determined, but claims of workplace misconduct have not received sufficient attention or follow-up.

“We examined actions taken by the authority (FNHA) in response to the allegations of workplace misconduct on the part of senior officials,” reads the audit report, released this week.

“We found that the authority had completed no documentation setting out steps taken, including whether it had conducted any additional investigation beyond asking managers whether these incidents had taken place.”

The Auditor General also reviewed files for 14 FNHA managers, “to determine whether there was evidence that the most qualified candidates had been hired in each case.” In three of the 14 cases, the people hired were not subject to background checks, nor were the positions they filled posted publicly.

Though a spokesman, the FNHA says it is “surprised the (Auditor General) gave an unsigned document the credibility it did.”

The new health authority conducted its own “investigation” into claims made in the document and says its efforts were “adequate for an unsigned document ... the investigation concluded the claims were unsubstantiated.”

But changes are being made to the way in which the FNHA conducts itself, based on recommendations from the Auditor General. The new health authority promises to “strengthen its policies in relation to recruitment” and to improve how it investigates and documents workplace misconduct.

As for Doug Kelly, his comment about childbearing nurses was made “in the context of (his) experience as a young leader” and “doesn’t represent our organizational hiring practices,” says the spokesman.

**Direct Link:** <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/sexism-cronyism-claims-hit-b-c-first-nations-health-agency-as-it-receives-billions-in-funding>

## **New Stanton hospital being built where aboriginal wellness centre was to go**

**'The land was identified,' says elders advisory council chair Francois Paulette**

By Guy Quenneville, [CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 08, 2016 7:00 AM CT Last Updated: Feb 08, 2016 7:00 AM CT



Blasting for construction of the new Stanton Territorial Hospital has been taking place on the Frame Lake side of Byrne Road since last fall. The chair of the Stanton Territorial Health Authority Elders' Advisory Council says that land had been identified last summer as the future location of an aboriginal wellness centre. (Guy Quenneville/CBC)

The chair of the Stanton Territorial Health Authority Elders' Advisory Council says land the territorial government set aside in Yellowknife for an aboriginal wellness centre is being blasted to lay the foundation for the new Stanton Territorial Hospital.

"In June [2015], we were told by the minister [of Health and Social Services, Glen Abernethy] that we would be given a wellness centre, and the land was identified," said Francois Paulette.

"And here this whole hill was just clear cut. I was wondering, 'What is going on?' The site that they were clearing was the site designated for the wellness centre."

The awarding of a contract to build a new hospital was announced last September. The territorial government didn't initially plan to build an entirely new hospital, instead putting out a request for proposals to update the existing hospital. But Boreal Health Partnerships, the winning contractor, submitted a plan for an entirely new hospital to sit beside the existing building.



Francois Paulette, chair of the Stanton Territorial Health Authority Elders' Advisory Council, says the council hasn't heard from the territorial government since last summer.

Paulette said the elders' advisory council, which last met in December, hasn't heard from the territorial government since last summer. He said a letter addressed to Abernethy after the blasting began last fall has also received no response.

"Bad communication, bad politics, bad leadership," he said.

## **'Very early days'**

Derek Elkin, an assistant deputy minister with the Department of Health and Social Services, says it's still possible for the wellness centre to be located between the site of the new hospital and the shore of Frame Lake.

"As we were doing the planning for the overall campus [for] the new hospital, we made sure that when we asked for proposals from the potential partners, that they allow for space within the site to accommodate a potential aboriginal wellness centre" said Elkin.

But Elkin said a location for the centre has not been determined.

Sue Cullen, CEO of the Stanton Territorial Health Authority, said planning for the centre is still in "very early days."

She said one of the chief challenges of the project is making sure it meets the needs of the territory's many aboriginal groups.

The elders advisory council has envisioned the centre as a place where aboriginal people from the territory could go for traditional ceremonies such as smudging, food, language, medicines and healers. Some of those activities, such as smudging, could not take place in the new hospital because of fire regulations, Cullen said.

Another facility is further along the planning process: the territorial government has included a 18-bed extended care facility in its 2016-2017 capital plan. No capital estimate has been cited (a builder hasn't even been chosen yet), but it's hoped construction will wrap up by 2019 — the same year the new hospital is scheduled to open.

The government hasn't selected a location for that facility either.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/stanton-hospital-aboriginal-wellness-centre-1.3436748>

## **Tungasuvvingat Inuit to suspend Mamisarvik Healing Centre**

**Ottawa healing centre has provided residential treatment programs for Inuit since 2003**

CBC News Posted: Feb 10, 2016 12:05 PM CT Last Updated: Feb 10, 2016 4:34 PM CT



Reepa Evis-Carleton, a program coordinator at Mamisarvik Healing Centre in Ottawa, said the feeling has been 'heavy' since it was announced that services would be suspended at the end of March due to funding shortfall. (CBC)

An Ottawa-based Inuit group is indefinitely suspending services at a healing centre that offers residential treatment programs for Inuit from across the country. The closure will take place at the end of March, due to a shortage of money.

The Mamisarvik Healing Centre has provided culturally-relevant programs in Inuktitut for addiction, as well as physical and sexual abuse, since 2003.

Reepa Evic-Carleton, a Mamisarvik program coordinator, said the Ottawa centre fills a gap in services that are not available in Nunavut, where service providers are overwhelmed dealing with social issues, such as poverty, high suicide rates, addiction and family violence.

"This place transforms people," she said. "You see a life change. You see a life begin to dream, begin to love themselves. Begin to forgive themselves. Begin to forgive others. These are major things that happen to a person here."

In a news release, Tungasuvvingat Inuit, which helps fund the centre, said the suspension will happen while the group "evaluates the structure and feasibility of delivering their residential addiction and trauma recovery counselling program."

Jason LeBlanc, TI's executive director, said there is "an absolute need for trauma-informed mental health services" for Inuit people.

"In particular, the variety we delivered with Mamisarvik where it was in Inuktitut, with Inuktitut-speaking counsellors, within our traditional value lens, taking respect for our culture and our history," he said.

Evic-Carleton added that Mamisarvik's programs are so important because of decades of oppression.

She recalled being forced out of her camp to a different settlement in Nunavut as a young girl, after her sibling was plucked from her family and sent to residential school.

"Because of these cultural oppressions we need these treatment centres across our country — not just here," she said, adding there should be a treatment centre in Nunavut, too.

## **Centre was 'a true success story'**

The healing centre was originally funded through the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, but when that closed in 2013, Tungasuvvingat Inuit said it invested its own funds.

The centre also received funding from the Nunavut government and Correctional Services Canada based on fees for services.

In a news release, TI board president Malaya Rheaume said the decision to close the centre was not taken lightly.

"The board of directors wants to acknowledge that Mamisarvik has been a true success story because of the great work of our staff and the clients," she said. "We have the

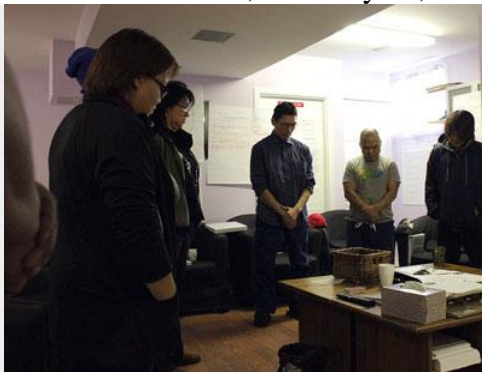
experience and expertise for this line of work and TI is committed to finding a financially viable way to help Inuit."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/ti-mamisarvik-healing-centre-1.3442166>

## **Inuit treatment centre, one of only two in Canada, to close in March**

**"We have a proven model of success that has empowered hundreds of lives"**

SARAH ROGERS, February 11, 2016 - 7:00 am



A 2013 morning group therapy session at Mamisarvik Healing Centre begins with a prayer. Clients discuss forgiveness, and their plans for coping in a healthy way once they leave the centre. (PHOTO BY LISA GREGOIRE)

An Ottawa-based residential treatment centre for Inuit recovering from addiction and trauma will close its doors this March 31 because it can't find enough money to keep going, its parent organization said Feb. 9.

Tungasuvvingat Inuit, an Inuit-specific health and social services provider, has run the Mamisarvik Healing Centre in Ottawa since 2003.

The 12-bed facility provides an eight-week addictions and trauma treatment program, and post-treatment counselling and care.

It launched that year thanks to funding delivered through the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, but the support was short-lived.

When the Aboriginal Healing Foundation wound down its operations in 2013, Mamisarvik lost \$800,000 a year in funding, and has since been forced to find new resources, including its own, to stay afloat.

"It is with great sadness that we announce the indefinite suspension of services at the Tungasuvvingat Inuit Mamisarvik Healing Centre effective March 31, 2016 while we evaluate the structure and feasibility of delivering our residential addiction and trauma recovery counselling program," the organization said in a release.

Over the last 12 years, Mamisarvik has provided treatment to well over 600 Inuit, most from Nunavut, but many from Ottawa and other regions.

Mamisarvik is one of only two Inuit-specific treatment centre in Canada. The only one left now is Kuujuaq's Isuarsivik treatment centre.

And its services are in high demand, including treatment for a wide range of traumas, from the negative effects of residential schools and relocation, suicide, neglect, and sexual and emotional abuse.

After the Aboriginal Healing Foundation closed in late 2013, TI was able to sustain Mamisarvik's operations largely with support from the Government of Nunavut, which pays about \$22,260 for each Nunavut client referred to the program.

A smaller portion of funding came through Correctional Services of Canada, which refers about 15 per cent of Mamisarvik's clients.

In 2015, TI invested about \$500,000 of its own money to keep the centre's doors open, but found itself empty-handed going into 2016-17.

"A residential treatment centre is not financially sustainable exclusively on a pay-as-you-go model," said Jason LeBlanc, TI's executive director.

"We are in need of ongoing operational funding as most other treatment centres receive from one level of government or another. We have a proven model of success that has empowered hundreds of lives and we want to link with people who can support those outcomes."

Malaya Rhéaume, the president of TI's board of directors, said the decision to close the centre was a difficult one to make.

"We have the experience and expertise for this line of work and TI is committed to finding a financially viable way to help Inuit," she said.

Mamisarvik's clients have called the centre a vital service, given the lack of treatment options geared towards Inuit.

Former client Marilyn Kiholik said in 2013 it would be a tragedy if the centre had to close for lack of money.

"There'd be more suicides, for sure, more babies getting hurt and not taken care of," she told *Nunatsiaq News*. "All kinds of problems."

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674residential\\_treatment\\_centre\\_for\\_inuit\\_one\\_of\\_only\\_two\\_in\\_canada\\_to\\_close](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674residential_treatment_centre_for_inuit_one_of_only_two_in_canada_to_close)

## **Opinion: First Nations health authority has 'transformational' impact**



## Anonymous letter that triggered audit provided no evidence to support claims

BY JOHN O'NEIL, SPECIAL TO THE SUN FEBRUARY 10, 2016



Ian Tom-Henry, 3, might need a little more coaxing as Pamela Poon, right, a dental hygienist for the First Nations Health Authority, and community aide Angel Henry attend to him at the Pauquachin band medical office.

In the late 1970s, as a naïve young graduate student, I spent two years living in a remote Inuit community in the central Arctic. I was there to study the impact of the recently opened federal health clinic on community health practices. The title of my first publication in 1981 was “The need for community control over health care in a Canadian Inuit community.” It was as clear to me then as it is today that the main reason why our health system has been ineffective in serving indigenous people is because of a lack of indigenous governance over the way in which health services are designed and delivered. Numerous studies and a Royal Commission have confirmed this simple observation over the ensuing 35 years.

Although there have been partial attempts to transfer portions of the health care system to First Nations and Inuit control in the past few decades, it was not until October 2013 with the creation of the First Nations Health Authority in BC, that the first comprehensive, province wide transfer of responsibility for health care from the federal government to First Nations finally occurred. The FNHA was the first, and remains the only transfer of this magnitude in Canada, and indeed is one of the few examples in the world of an indigenous run comprehensive health organization. There are many explanations why such an obvious solution has taken so long, but the primary reason is the structural racism embedded in a colonial system that has been consistent in denigrating First Nations capacity to manage their own affairs.

It was with these ideas in mind that I read with dismay the news reports last week on the Auditor General's investigations of an anonymous letter accusing the FNHA leadership of poor management practices. Although the Auditor General suggests progress on

organizational governance is underway, and the federal Minister of Health has indicated strong support for the FNHA leadership, the damage to public perceptions is done.

Over the past two years I have led a team of researchers from the university and the FNHA in a study funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, to document the transformational changes that are taking place in BC First Nations health care. We interviewed senior leadership in the Health Authorities and BC Ministry of Health, First Nations community Health Directors, and a range of senior staff and Board members at FNHA. The results of this study are overwhelmingly positive.

Stakeholders pointed to the radical differences in engagement between FNHA leaders and their counterparts in the provincial health care system. Trust and respect replaced resentment and suspicion almost overnight. Working groups emerged at provincial and regional levels to jointly plan for harmonized services. Indigenous approaches to maintain health and healing began to permeate planning discussions throughout the provincial system. Health Authority leaders described examples of new initiatives to improve continuity of care across what was once an insurmountable jurisdictional divide, and new programs have emerged in primary care and mental health that would have been impossible three years ago.

Although everyone acknowledged there were still challenges, the overwhelming sentiment from these leaders was that the FNHA needed the full support of the health care community if the health disparities prevalent in communities were to finally be addressed. These results, derived from a rigorous evaluation of evidence, stand in glaring contrast to an anonymous letter which provided no evidence to support its claims.

The creation of the FNHA is having a transformational impact on the health care available to indigenous people in BC. Government, health authorities and particularly the communities expect that nearly 50 years of a federal colonial approach to health care will be transformed overnight. Needless to say, there will be tensions, misunderstandings and organizational cultural clashes. Patience and support from both internal and external stakeholders are required. Importantly, let's focus on how this model advances the integration of provincial and First Nation health services, a first for this country.

John O'Neil is a professor and dean at the faculty of health sciences at Simon Fraser University.

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.vancouversun.com/health/Opinion+First+Nations+health+authority+transformational+impact/11711153/story.html>

# First Nation continuing bid to bring safe water, sewage services to Scugog Island

Mississaugas of Scugog Island hoping to secure grant for underground infrastructure



**Lisa Edgar Mississaugas of Scugog Island**

Benjamin Priebe / Metroland

*SCUGOG -- Lisa Edgar says the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation are planning to build a water treatment plant to supply water to the First Nations residents. If the appropriate approvals are granted, they would seek to extend the service to residents across the island. May 22, 2015.*

Port Perry Star

By **Chris Hall**, 8 hours ago

SCUGOG ISLAND -- The Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation are continuing to forge ahead with plans to create a water treatment plant that will deliver safe water to its residents and possibly the rest of Scugog Island.

The First Nation was successful in its bid for a Small Communities Fund grant in 2015, securing \$1.1 million from each of the federal and provincial governments that will go towards construction of a new \$3.3 million water treatment plant.

That plant will be located on Hood Drive, just off of Island Road, near the northern end of Scugog Island. A watermain already exists there, making it an ideal spot to build the water treatment plant, said Desmond Verasammy, who has been contracted by the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation to oversee the project.

He expects construction to start on the plant this spring and last about a year.

The First Nation self-funded a feasibility study which evaluated all of the options for water treatment, eventually settling on the Hood Drive plan, said Mr. Verasammy. The new plant will have the capacity to serve the current First Nation population as well as growth in the future, he added.

"This has been long over-due and the opportunities are just right," said Mr. Verasammy, noting the First Nation has been under a drinking water advisory since 2008.

Two wells on the First Nation lands will serve as the primary source for the treatment plant and more wells will be drilled as required, he said. There are also two wells on Chandler Drive.

Getting the drinking water to homes on the First Nation land will be the next big step, stressed Mr. Verasammy.

As part of the second intake of the Small Communities Fund, the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation will submit a request for two-thirds funding to cover the \$3.6 million cost of installing water distribution pipes underground that will deliver water to residents.

A portion of that grant will also be used to install wastewater infrastructure that can be buried at the same time, added Mr. Verasammy.

He explained there are no wastewater services on the First Nation and that some of the aging septic tanks used by residents are sinking or breaching, which could lead to contaminated water sources.

"To deal with the wastewater, we want to do our part," said Mr. Verasammy.

The plan, he continued, is to maximize efficiencies and bury both water and wastewater pipes in the ground at the same time. Wastewater would then be sent to the First Nation treatment plant on Island Road across from the Great Blue Heron Charity Casino, which is currently running at 15- to 20-per cent capacity.

"There is an abundance of capacity at the casino," said Mr. Verasammy.

If the grant application is successful, he expects the pipes to be in the ground by the end of 2017 or spring 2018.

Further down the road, the third phase of the plan -- through a future Small Communities Fund applications intake -- calls for fire hydrants to be installed on the First Nation and an elevated water storage tank to be built.

And, once First Nation residents have access to safe water and wastewater facilities, the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation hopes to extend the services beyond their borders.

"We're forging ahead and once we have provided our First Nation community with safe, potable drinking water we hope to extend the services potentially... to non-First Nation residents," said Lisa Edgar, the First Nation manager.

"At the end of the day, the only thing that is a little disappointing is the Region doesn't seem to be too interested in improving services for Island residents," she said.

Durham must endorse the plan to offer water and wastewater services to residents outside of the First Nation boundaries, said Mr. Verasammy. A joint meeting has been held with regional, Scugog and First Nation officials, he added.

Among the barriers handcuffing the plan is the Greenbelt policy, which does not permit the urbanization of rural areas, explained Mr. Verasammy.

"We need the Region's support," he said. "Ultimately it has to be passed by the Province, but the Region has to approve it."

Any decision on the extension of services on Scugog Island, stressed John Presta, is out of the Region's hands.

"It's not that we're not in favour of it, the way it's been painted, it's just that the provincial designation of Greenbelt on Scugog Island allows for very limited avenues in the legislation in allowing municipal services to be extended to provide services to residents in the Greenbelt," said Mr. Presta, Durham's director of environmental services.

It's up to the First Nation, he stressed, to petition and convince the Province to make an exception within the Greenbelt policy.

Scugog Island "is a Greenbelt area and we don't have any direction to plan for services for an area not designated as urban," said Mr. Presta.

He's also unsure if the Region would be involved or not even if the First Nation received the approvals it needs from the Province.

"We're not saying no -- it might be a good concept -- but we're working with the rules we have," said Mr. Presta.

#### HOW THIS IMPACTS YOU

- There are an estimated 800 homes and 2,000 residents on Scugog Island
- Water source concerns on Scugog Island are very common
- The Region of Durham is responsible for providing municipal water and sewage services in Scugog Township
- The Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation sewage treatment plant for the Great Blue Heron charity casino is only operating at 15 to 20 per cent of its capacity.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.durhamregion.com/news-story/6271405-first-nation-continuing-bid-to-bring-safe-water-sewage-services-to-scugog-island/>

## Aboriginal History

### James Daschuk uncovers truths about First Nations history

SEAN TREMBATH, SASKATOON STARPHOENIX

Published on: February 5, 2016 | Last Updated: February 5, 2016 10:11 AM CST



James Daschuk is the author of *Clearing the Plains*, an influential 2013 book about the systematic persecution of First Nations populations on the Prairies.

James Daschuk wanted to tackle the most important question he could think of.

It was 25 years ago. He was living in Saskatchewan while working on his master's degree from the University of Manitoba.

"I was sitting in whatever little hovel I lived in as a master's student and I was thinking, 'What's the most important topic I can do?'" Daschuk says.

He knew he wanted to study the wealth of historical documents from the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, the second-largest corporate archive in the world. The meticulous journals kept by the company's men across Western Canada gave a remarkably thorough look at the early years of contact between the European settlers and the indigenous people who had lived on the Prairies for centuries.

Daschuk saw an opportunity to get at a topic that is rooted in those early interactions but still resonates today. Previous studies had determined that First Nations people on the Prairies had been incredibly healthy prior to the coming of settlers. Why, then, are health outcomes for indigenous people now much worse than for those who descended from settlers?

"I still think the gap between we as settlers and the indigenous population, I still think that gap is the biggest thing that's dragging us down as a society," Daschuk says.

This question was the beginning of more than two decades of research that culminated in *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life*.

Published in 2013 by the University of Regina Press, the book outlines the systematic repression of the indigenous people of the northern plains and the catastrophic effects it had on their health.

*Clearing the Plains* has been a huge success. There are 18,500 copies in print, a massive number for any academic book. It won five Saskatchewan Book Awards and a Governor General's medal.

"I'm humbled and honoured. I was happy to have one copy of the book printed," he says. Since its publication, Daschuk has been invited to speak all over Canada about his work. He admits that most of what he wrote about were not new discoveries, especially to scholars of Canadian history. His contribution was putting it all together in one place and writing in a way that a layperson can understand.

Awards aside, the book has been an important piece of Canada's recent move toward coming to terms with its history of inhumane treatment of indigenous people, exemplified by the recent release of the full report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

"It really bursts people's bubbles to acknowledge or understand that this is how Canada was settled," says Priscilla Settee, an associate professor of indigenous studies at the University of Saskatchewan.

She says *Clearing the Plains* made a huge impact, especially because of its accessibility to everyday Canadians who may not have known the extent of what was done on the Prairies.

"The first thing in reconciliation is to uncover and acknowledge the truth," Settee says.

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**Clearing the Plains was the result of more than 10 years of research by James Daschuk.** BRYAN SCHLOSSER / REGINA LEADER-POST

Daschuk came to Saskatchewan with his spouse more than 25 years ago. They bounced back and forth between Regina and Saskatoon before settling in Regina two decades ago.

He was already a U of M grad student by that point. He would spend some time in Winnipeg for school and the rest with his spouse in Regina, where he is an associate professor in the University of Regina's faculty of kinesiology and health studies.

He remembers his first visit to the Hudson's Bay archive. After touring the stacks, the guide showing them around asked if there was anything in particular they'd like to see.

Having grown up in Northern Ontario, Daschuk had spent many days canoeing and exploring the northern tundra. He asked to see some original handwriting of Samuel Hearne, the English fur trapper and naturalist who was one of the first settlers to explore the routes west of Hudson Bay.

"Being able to see those originals, there was almost a connection. It kind of brought me right into that headspace," Daschuk says.

When it came time to decide on a thesis topic, it was clear to him what the most important issue in western Canadian society was.

"Even 25 years later, it's still, basically, race relations between the mainstream population and the indigenous population," he says.



**James Daschuk studies microfilm in his home office.** BRYAN SCHLOSSER / REGINA LEADER-POST

Daschuk's area of focus was health rather than politics. The health outcomes of a group — how long they live, why they die — are the best indicator of their place in the wider context of society.

"If you're oppressed, there are going to be health implications," he says.



Today, health outcomes for First Nations people on the Prairies are much worse than those of immigrant origin.

“I wanted to figure out where did the gap in health outcomes originate? I spent 15 years trying to piece together an answer to that simple question,” Daschuk says.

The level of detail in the Hudson’s Bay Company archives allowed Daschuk to get a picture of the general state of health at any given period in the early days of contact. Company employees would document who came in, how many there were and most importantly, how healthy they appeared.

“Me and other scholars have been able to put together a pretty detailed medical history of how things were going down up until the 1870s,” Daschuk says.

From there, with the establishment of Canada and John A. Macdonald’s efforts to settle the land and build a cross-country railway, government documents become more prevalent.

Macdonald’s place in Canadian history is contentious. On one hand, he is regarded by many as the father of our country. His efforts helped establish the Canada we know today.

On the other, Macdonald was exceptionally cruel in his dealing with indigenous people.

Daschuk calls the first 10 years of Macdonald’s reign “the most crucial decade in the relationship between First Nations people and Canada.” Residential schools and the pass system were enacted. Macdonald is quoted in Parliament as saying he was keeping indigenous people on the brink of starvation.

“He did not have to be so cruel,” Daschuk said.

In just a few years, almost all of the Prairies’ indigenous people were confined to reserves under horrible living conditions. Tuberculosis went from relatively uncommon to the most common cause of death. Physicians sent to reserves saw so much tuberculosis that some of them concluded it was inherent to First Nations people, according to Daschuk.

Macdonald’s legacy was in the public spotlight as 2015 marked what would have been his 200th birthday. Daschuk’s book led to him taking part in some public discussions about Macdonald.

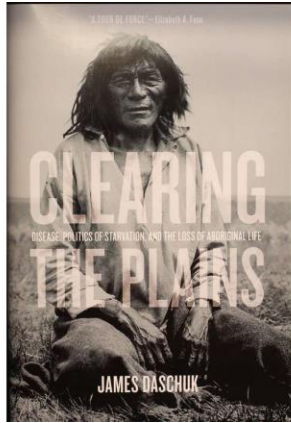
One of the common defences Daschuk heard was that Macdonald was a man of his time, and to judge him by today’s standards would be unfair. There is a problem with that argument, Daschuk said.

Macdonald was supposed to observe the agreements made in the various treaties signed by Canada and the First Nations people. One of the key points involved Canada’s obligation to feed indigenous people in times of famine.

As the bison disappeared, First Nations people found themselves starving. Macdonald did not live up to the bargain made in the treaties. Even by the standard of the day, his actions were illegal, Daschuk says.

“What that means is the foundation of western society is based on, if not a lie, some pretty bad, illegal actions on the part of the state. The foundation of our society is kind of rotten,” he says.

• • •



**James Daschuk spent 10 years turning his PhD thesis into the finished book *Clearing the Plains*.**

Daschuk completed his PhD thesis in 2002. For the next 10 years he worked on turning it into a book.

“It’s kind of like having a car in the garage that you work on forever,” he says.

The finished book was rejected by the federal Awards to Scholarly Publishing program, which is designed to get academic books published. Luckily for Daschuk, a new publishing company was springing up in Regina.

Bruce Walsh is director and publisher of the University of Regina Press. Formerly known as the Canadian Plains Research Centre press, the publishing company was undergoing a transformation in 2012.

Walsh was looking through manuscripts, looking for something to spearhead the new company. One caught his eye.

“It was called *Patterns of Disease, Policies of Starvation*,” Walsh remembers.

The title was evocative. Walsh recognized immediately that it was the type of subject matter that could tap into the current Canadian zeitgeist. Most importantly, Walsh loved the writing.

“I read it and I just said, ‘Oh my God, this is a really important book,’ ” Walsh says.

A veteran of the publishing game, Walsh saw potential for the book to go beyond the typical scope of scholarly publishing. This book could be in *Chapters*.

“You’re always looking for that book, and it was that book. I was pretty confident about it,” he says.

*Clearing the Plains* was released in 2013. Reviews were good and it started selling to a mainstream audience. On top of the quality of the work, Walsh credits Daschuk’s promotional efforts with pushing the title into the spotlight.

“He’s a passionate scholar and writer. Another reason why the book has been so successful is he’s done so much on-the-ground work,” Walsh says.

Three years later, Daschuk is still asked to appear at events around Canada to present his work. He has noticed differences in how people of varying backgrounds respond to the stories he tells.

He says that when he speaks to a mixed crowd, he will often see shock and despair in the faces of white people as he describes the systematic repression of indigenous people. The indigenous people in the crowd are often much less surprised. They already know a lot of these things.

At the same time, Daschuk says he has been thanked many times by aboriginal people for telling their stories, especially in the context of mainstream academia.

“I’ve been confronted with my own white privilege,” he says.

He can remember at least five times an indigenous person has specifically thanked him for writing the book while being white.

“People have said, ‘If we had written it, people would just say we’re complaining,’ ”

Daschuk says.

While happy to be thanked, Daschuk is not pleased with the system that grants him, a middle-class white professor, more perceived authority than someone who is directly affected by the injustices he writes about.

He is passionate about spreading the message, especially given the inequalities rooted in Canada’s early history that still exist today. He points to education funding on reserves, where a school will get only 70 to 80 per cent as much money per student as a provincially funded public school.

“Something as simple as education function has a huge effect on health outcomes for generations to come,” he says.

Studies have shown the link between lack of education and general well being.

“If you don’t finish high school, you’re going to end up sicker and you’ll die sooner,”

Daschuk says.

He is not without optimism. Developments like the TRC report, and the public discourse it has fostered, indicate a willingness to examine how our society might right its inherent inequalities.

“I think we’re at a moment. I think there’s enough momentum, and goodwill in the general population,” Daschuk says.

It’s why the history in *Clearing the Plains* is so important to share. Confronted with the depth of research, it is impossible to deny that our country still stands on a problematic foundation.

“The stories were so profound and the truths, in some cases, were so ugly that we can’t turn our backs on them.”

**Direct Link:** <http://thestarphoenix.com/life/bridges/james-daschuk-uncovers-truths-about-first-nations-history>

## New book questions legacy of Hearne’s Bloody Falls story

**Massacre narrative may unfairly describe Inuit-Dene relations**

STEVE DUCHARME, February 08, 2016 - 8:45 am



Sahtu and Tlicho Dene gather in Kugluktuk, in a photo taken in 2008. Cameron's book points out that the

Qallunaat narrative of Inuit-Dene relations is constructed to create a form of knowledge that serves the interests of settlers. (PHOTO COURTESY OF EMILIE CAMERON)



Far Off Metal River by Carleton University geography professor Emilie Cameron looks at the legacy of Samuel Hearne's Bloody Falls Massacre narrative. (COURTESY OF EMILIE CAMERON)

How powerful is one story? Just ask the Inuit of Kugluktuk.

Nearby, at the Bloody Falls on the Coppermine River, is a type of ragweed called *senecio lugens*. In Latin it means “to mourn.”

It's a tribute of sorts by Western science to the Inuit massacred there by Dene raiders in 1771, as witnessed by explorer Samuel Hearne.

For people in Kugluktuk, Hearne's story has only ever been a cultural footnote. And the “massacre” may not have even happened as described, say some historians.

But for one researcher, the influence of Hearne's memoir goes beyond a flora textbook: it's a story that's unfairly grown to characterize the region.

In her book *Far Off Metal River*, author Emilie Cameron argues Hearne's account of the Bloody Falls Massacre has less to do with the region — or its people — as it does with outsiders, or “Qallunaat” themselves.

“Qallunaat tell this story as though it's only about Inuit and Dene, but I think it's more a story about Qallunaat,” Cameron told *Nunatsiaq News* from her home in Ottawa.

Cameron is an assistant professor at Carleton University's Department of Geography and Environmental Studies. She's spent 10 years researching the impact of Hearne's story from early-colonial times through to the present.

“Mostly I became interested in how important the story was to outsiders and how Inuit in town could speak to it if asked, but it was clearly not the centre of their own lives and history,” she explained.

Hearne was contracted by the Hudson's Bay Co. in 1769 to investigate rumored metal deposits at the then-unknown Coppermine River on the frontiers of their fur trade empire.

After two failed overland attempts from Churchill, Hearne successfully reached the Coppermine on his third journey — traveling as the sole European in a group of Chipewyan and Dene.

According to Hearne's 1795 published account, upon his arrival, he watched in horror as his Dene guides fell upon a camp of Inuit at the base of the river, slaughtering men, women and children as they slept.

"It's told by Hearne as a vicious, bloodthirsty, classic tale of Indigenous savagery," Cameron said.

Hearne never found the vast copper deposits hoped for at the Coppermine and his HBC benefactors largely regarded the expedition as a failure.

But the "Bloody Falls Massacre" — as it became known — nevertheless caught the imagination of British audiences, becoming a classic tale of European exploration in the North.

It also came to characterize the Inuit and Dene as inherently hostile towards each other.

But why? Cameron believes Hearne's story hit all the right notes for its colonial audience.

"In those early days, it became very important for the British to think of themselves as people that were affected by violence and that Indigenous people are savage," Cameron said.

"It's a lie, but a very helpful lie because it allowed the British to think all the violence they carried out in their various colonial holdings was justified."

Misrepresentative stories such as Hearne's have been told, rehashed or invented by Qallunaat through to the present. Eventually, Cameron believes, a story can be told often enough that it stops being questioned.

"The weight of knowledge production from the South is so heavy and our sense of knowledge is so inflated that it oversells the story."

Inuit and Dene gatherings attended by Cameron during her research testify to the richness of history shared between the two nations.

"You can't boil it down to this one event that may or may not have happened in the 18th century. It's absurd," she said.

At the end of the day, reminds Cameron, many stories like Hearne's had everything to do with money, despite being propped up as reflective cultural anecdotes.

And she thinks it's important for Qallunaat to know that.

Producing knowledge and mapping the North is not neutral, Cameron stressed, and there's a direct line of succession between Hearne's quest for copper and examples of recent exploration — such as multinational companies conducting seismic testing offshore of Baffin Island.

"The underlying interest of settlers in the North has always been, and remains, economic exploitation. If you send people to map resources it leads the way to those resources being extracted," she said.

Cameron wants her book to challenge Qallunaat to reexamine their relationship with the North, and the influence their knowledge has on the region even today.

"It asks to us come to terms that [Qallunaat] knowledge and our claims are narrow and often illegitimate and yet very powerful," she said.

*Far Off Metal River* was published in the summer of 2015, with a paperback version set to be released this March.

In Canada, order your copy of *Far Off Metal River* from UTP Distribution at:

UTP Distribution  
5201 Dufferin Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
M3H 5T8

Phone orders: 1(800) 565-9523 or (416) 667-7791

Fax orders: 1(800) 221-9985 or (416) 667-7832

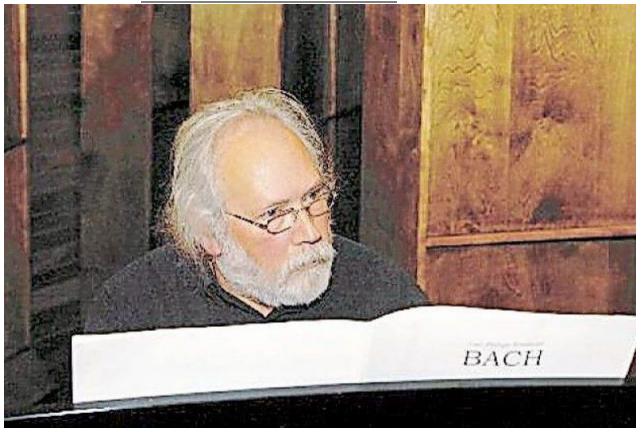
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## Looking to the future through examining the past

Evan Carene [editor@advertiser.nl.ca](mailto:editor@advertiser.nl.ca) Published on February 8, 2016



Dr. Tom Gordon of Memorial University says it has taken years to see a cultural sustainability project come to life in Labrador. The initiative has now begun.

A collaborative project is underway on the topic of cultural sustainability in Labrador.

Dr. Tom Gordon of Memorial University is leading the project, which he said has been in the works for a long time.

"This is a project that's been three years in the making and in another sense 30 or 40 years," he said. "It stems from long ago, for the last 30 years, at least, there have been researchers from Memorial and other universities who have worked collaboratively with the people of Nunatsiavut on topics of interest to both parties."

He said what's come about is some excellent collaborative research that comes from

lived experience and knowledge that comes from observation. A couple of years ago a group of researchers and the minister and deputy minister of culture from the Nunatsiavut government started talking about doing individual projects in a collaborative, co-ordinated way.

Knowledge bearers from Nunatsiavut could work with academic researchers on the topic of cultural sustainability for the Nunatsiavut, Gordon said.

“Not so much to freeze the Inuit of Labrador into some sort of museum structure, but to get a more profound understanding from these various perspectives,” Gordon said. “What are the values that underscore Inuit identity as Nunatsiavut moves forward, to become a contemporary indigenous government, a contemporary society? How can those values be reflected and maintained in the way the society organizes?”

That was the starting point of the project, known as Tradition and Transition Among the Labrador Inuit, which is funded by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) partnership grant valued at \$2.3 million; investments of \$1.6 million from the Nunatsiavut Government and \$1.38 million from Memorial University; and \$2.12 million in combined contributions from 20 partner organizations. Gordon said they went through a 15-month consultation process with the impacted communities before making the research grant submission.

The project has three broad themes: how people are defined by the environment in which they live; the social patterns of how to interact in Nunatsiavut and how that is distinct to the history and the structure of the communities there; and how people express who they are through creative expression, whether through how they speak, the stories they tell, the songs they sing, the embroidery patterns they put on their boots and other forms of creative expression. There are 49 sub-projects that will be under the umbrella of the larger project.

“We’re going through just the widest possible range of topics,” Gordon said. “We have a group working down in Rigolet, for instance, excavating an 18th-century Inuit village at the end of their now infamous boardwalk, which will both tell us about how the people of Rigolet area lived 200 years ago and create something of a tourist attraction for the town. We have a group of people who are working on collecting stories from Inuit storytellers that we can morph into children’s books in Inuktitut so we can help support the early childhood language strategies the Nunatsiavut government has going. We have another group of people who are collecting the stories of women in leadership roles, whether they are political or community leadership roles, chronicling those stories so we can create a bank of role models for people to look at.”

The potential outcomes for the project are far-reaching, Gordon said. One of them is to develop content for the Illusuak cultural centre that’s going to be the home for Nunatsiavut heritage that’s being built in Nain. Another is to develop content for the schools in Nunatsiavut to help them centre their curriculum on Inuit values and stories. They will also use the research to help the government develop policy backgrounders that will help sustain those values in the decision made by government.

“Nunatsiavut is only 10 years old and in that short period of time they developed a very robust research capacity around the environment and research management,” he said.

“They haven’t had the opportunity to develop that same quality of resource capacity around matters cultural. We’re hoping because we’re doing this in a collaborative way, engaging as many people as we can on the project that this will be an exercise in capacity



building. The youth of Nunatsiavut are in positions to manage their own culture as they go forward.”

## Aboriginal Identity & Representation

### Winnipeg’s taxi industry is rife with racism, some indigenous people say

Jackie Traverse said she and other indigenous women are treated “like garbage” — subject to discrimination, sexual harassment and even assault.



Grand Chief Terrance Nelson with the Southern Chiefs Organization said his office has compiled dozens of stories from women who have been harassed, discriminated against and seriously assaulted. The issue is not being taken seriously by police or by the taxi industry, he said.

**By:** Chinta Puxley The Canadian Press, Published on Thu Feb 04 2016

**WINNIPEG**—Some indigenous people say Winnipeg’s taxi industry is rife with racism and are calling for a boycott until their concerns are addressed.

Jackie Traverse said she and other indigenous women are treated “like garbage” — subject to discrimination, sexual harassment and even assault. Most cab drivers demand payment up front from aboriginal passengers, if they stop to pick them up at all, she said.

Traverse has started a volunteer ride-sharing page for indigenous women and is calling for people to boycott the taxis.

“I’m hoping to hit them in the wallet,” said Traverse, a 46-year-old artist. “We make up a good portion of their income and you don’t treat customers like garbage.”

Winnipeg has spent the last year trying to address race relations after Maclean’s magazine dubbed it the [most racist city in Canada](#).

Despite a [recent race summit](#), problems persist. A decorated indigenous war veteran said he was recently kicked out of a downtown mall by a security guard. A grand chief complained last month she was profiled and followed by security in a store before she approached the manager.

Traverse said she has been forced out of a moving cab by a driver and was assaulted years ago but didn’t to press charges. She has resorted to waving money while trying to hail a cab just to get one to stop. She said she is almost always asked to pay up front.

“They shouldn’t paint everybody with the same brush.”

Grand Chief Terrance Nelson with the Southern Chiefs Organization said his office has compiled dozens of stories from women who have been harassed, discriminated against and seriously assaulted. The issue is not being taken seriously by police or by the taxi industry, he said.

The organization is looking at starting its own taxi company with a fleet of 10 cabs within six months, he said.

“There is growing frustration. These are our mothers, our daughters, our sisters, our granddaughters. It’s very, very personal.”

Taxicab board chairman David Sanders said the board has received a few formal complaints and acts quickly to investigate. People often wait too long to lodge a complaint or don’t show up to a formal hearing, which makes it harder to address, he said.

“Everyone should feel safe taking a cab in Winnipeg,” Sanders said. “The extent to which they don’t means we have more work to do.”

The board has reached out to indigenous organizations and will look at providing more cultural training to drivers — including indigenous history and conflict resolution, he said.

A consultation on the state of the industry is to get underway after the April 19 provincial election, he added.

Grand Chief Sheila North Wilson, who represents northern First Nations, said that’s just a start. More indigenous people should be hired by the industry and there should be a greater emphasis on educating all newcomers about First Nations, she suggested.

North Wilson said the inability of young women to count on a safe ride home is putting them at risk at a time when the number of [missing and murdered indigenous women](#) hovers around 1,200.

“It puts people who are already at vulnerable stages in their lives to be more exposed to the element of racism on our streets.”

North Wilson does see the tolerance for racism running out.

“Marginalized people (are) standing up for themselves and saying enough is enough. We demand respect and deserve respect.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/02/04/winnipeg-taxi-industry-accused-of-racism-discrimination.html>

## **PEI park honours general who wanted to kill aboriginal people, says Mi'kmaq leader**

John Joe Sark says the name of General Jeffery Amherst should be removed from the Port-la-Joye—Fort Amherst historic site because Amherst's goal was to wipe out aboriginal peoples.



Mi'kmaq leader John Joe Sark says the name of General Jeffery Amherst should be removed from the park near Charlottetown.

**By:** The Canadian Press, Published on Mon Feb 08 2016

CHARLOTTETOWN—A Mi'kmaq leader says it's an insult that a national park in Prince Edward Island bears the name of a military general who wanted to kill aboriginal people with smallpox.

John Joe Sark — a member of the Mi'kmaq Nation traditional government — says the name of General Jeffery Amherst should be removed from the park near Charlottetown.

He says the Port-la-Joye—Fort Amherst historic site is insulting because Amherst's goal was to wipe out aboriginal peoples.

Sark wants the federal government to change the name to reflect how Mi'kmaq people lived in the region long before and ever since European settlers.

Amherst College in Massachusetts said last month the British military commander who served in the 1700s would no longer appear in official communications or as a mascot.

Lord Jeff — as he was known around campus — was widely seen an oppressive figure who supported using blankets infected with smallpox to kill aboriginal people.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/02/08/pei-park-honours-general-who-wanted-to-kill-aboriginal-people-says-mikmaq-leader.html>

# First Nations chief upset airport security mishandled sacred items: 'You shouldn't be doing this to me'

POSTMEDIA NEWS | February 10, 2016 8:50 AM ET



Adrian Wyld / Canadian PressGrand Chief Derek Nepinak of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs says the items had already been x-rayed.

Security staff at Ottawa International Airport are being investigated after a prominent First Nations' leader complained they acted disrespectfully in handling a ceremonial bundle he had as carry-on luggage.

Derek Nepinak, grand chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, said that airport security staff showed a lack of cultural sensitivity during the screening process by mishandling and opening the object, which included a sacred pipe and tobacco, contrary to his wishes.

"I believe it to be one of the highest forms of disrespect that you could ever show to sacred items of our culture when somebody handles them uninvited or for the wrong reasons," he told the Winnipeg Free Press in recounting the Monday incident.



Sean Kilpatrick / PostmediaA person walks past a security sign at the Ottawa International Airport in Ottawa.

“I said, ‘You shouldn’t be doing this to me.’ I’ve had this bundle all over the world and the most difficult time I get is right here in my own homeland, in Ottawa of all places.”

The Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA) is investigating the matter following Nepinak’s complaint.

“When it comes to sacred items, we have specific procedures in place, and the screening officers are aware it’s part of their training to be very cautious, be very discreet and respectful,” CATSA spokesman Mathieu Larocque told CBC News, adding that security footage would be reviewed and the employees involved interviewed.

“If there is a need for a further check of any items that appear to be sacred items, they need to use discretion and treat the items with dignity.”

Nepinak maintains the ceremonial bundle had already been scanned by an X-ray. He believes staff wanted to examine the bowl of his pipe more closely.

In this case, a female security guard was handling the object when Nepinak intervened and told her not to touch it.

“The girl working there was clearly in a hurry so she could do her job and get on to the next person. She wasn’t taking the amount of care that I would have expected from someone who had any clue about what they were doing when it came to a sacred bundle,” he told the newspaper.

“I told her she should not be touching the things in the bundle, and I think she thought I was challenging her authority or challenging her in some way so she got upset and there was an exchange (verbal). Finally I said, ‘If it has to be handled, a man needs to handle it.’”

It is customary for women to handle women’s pipes, and men to handle men’s pipes, Nepinak explained.

The woman brought a male staff member over, but Nepinak was still troubled. “It was taken apart. The bowl of my pipe was the issue. They were uncertain as to what it was when it passed through the X-ray machine,” he said.

“He was clearly uncomfortable and shaking a little bit and not handling the items the way I would expect someone to handle sacred items,” Nepinak said. “He asked me to take over and so I wrapped everything up and left.”

Nepinak said he intends to speak to Transport Canada about the matter, telling officials that security staff need to be better trained when it comes to inspecting cultural items indigenous people bring on planes.

“There should be a cultural awareness here in Canada, of all places, that indigenous people carry bundles with them when we travel,” said Nepinak.

**Direct Link:** <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/first-nations-chief-upset-airport-security-mishandled-sacred-items-you-shouldnt-be-doing-this-to-me>

## Aboriginal Inequality & Poverty

### A tiny home to solve a large problem



Rich Chapman (left), youth agreement support outreach worker, youth programs manager Barry McDougall and president Valerie Chiba, all with the First Nations Friendship Centre, look over some of the plans for a tiny home that might be a way of solving the youth housing crisis in the North Okanagan.

by [Katherine Mortimer - Vernon Morning Star](#)

posted Feb 7, 2016 at 1:00 AM

If Barry McDougall has his way, a community of tiny homes will soon sprout up in Vernon.

The manager of the Kekuli Centre apartment complex and youth programs for the First Nations Friendship Centre (FNFC) is hoping to find a solution to the housing crisis for low-income youth who are facing barriers to affordable housing and are at risk of being homeless.

“In the interest of providing low-cost housing for youth at risk, we are proposing the construction of a transportable tiny home to be raffled off as a fundraising initiative

on behalf of the First Nations Friendship Centre,” said McDougall. “The project will raise the urgency of providing housing for those facing barriers.”

With a typical family home around 2,600 square feet, a tiny home is between 100 and 400 square feet.

“I have a background in log house and timber frame construction so I was thinking making and raffling a tiny house would be a great way to make some money for the centre,” said McDougall. “Or, even better, perhaps someone will buy the house and donate it back to the FNFC.”

“I spoke with Robert Kjarsgaard (Okanagan College residential construction program administrator) and he thought it might be a good opportunity to increase training for aboriginal carpenters.”

The idea, said McDougall, is to develop a program in conjunction with the college for a trades training program specifically developed for the urban aboriginal worker interested in learning the eco-technology and carpentry skills needed to build tiny homes.

It is anticipated to have at least three aboriginal carpenters involved as well as other contractors.

The FNFC envisions a small co-housing community in Vernon to provide housing for youth ages 19 to 29 and featuring a common kitchen and recreation area.

“We know we can build 20 of these units and manage a co-housing project,” said McDougall. “I have talked to Vernon Village Cohousing and they are interested.”

Currently, FNFC is preparing a call of interest from the public to support the development and construction of one tiny home and seeking interest from agencies, companies and individuals to donate the materials, funding and expertise needed to build the house.

“This is also an opportunity for elders with experience to share with construction trainees to build an environmentally sensitive tiny home,” said McDougall. “A lot of these young people have no support and to have them mix with elders would be fantastic.”

He said this vision is a continuation of the Kekuli apartment complex, owned and operated by the FNFC and providing safe and clean accommodation for all youth up



to the age of 29, who are homeless or at risk of being homeless because of a physical, social or mental condition or disability.

“Across Canada, 70 per cent of aboriginal people now live off reserve in urban settings and in this area, it’s 50 per cent. Young people are facing barriers to education and housing,” said McDougall. “On average we receive four to five applications bi-weekly from people facing a housing crisis and most are turned away as vacancies are rare. A common phrase from individuals asked about their present housing is, ‘I am couch surfing.’

“When you hit 19, the world stops as you know it. You have to get into adult assumptions, but they are still kids.”

Rich Chapman is youth agreement support outreach worker for the FNFC. Based at Kekuli Centre, he works with both aboriginal and non-aboriginal youth.

“My whole position is dedicated to 16 to 18-year-olds who are not in a home or living with family and they get into agreements with the government to help them find a place to live,” he said. “But we need to make sure they are safe — they are staying in hotels or couch surfing.

“The barriers to housing stop lots of people with mental health issues. The benefit of a program like this is that they can develop the skills and the leadership and team building and could be ready for all kinds of things.”

While BC Housing works in partnership with the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA) to address the need for appropriate aboriginal social housing, FNFC president Valerie Chiba said there has been limited funding for youth requiring housing assistance.

“We have not had any new funding coming down the pipeline for our youth,” she said. “Housing here isn’t ideal. And I always feel for our men. There are a lot more resources for our women, but our men are really suffering as well. We have a lot of men who are single fathers and it’s difficult for them.

“Youth housing has always been an issue. Anytime we go and apply for housing, it’s always family housing we apply for. There is lots of money coming down the pipeline but it’s for on-reserve housing only. (Housing minister) Rich Coleman is an advocate for affordable housing, and they know it’s not all about housing — it’s way cheaper to have people housed than to have them be homeless. We pray for these kids.”

McDougall plans on soliciting every company and organization he knows in the North Okanagan for products and materials to build the tiny home, and is happy to hand out tax receipts.

“The city has the key to the problem, it needs to open up areas in the community that are suitable for suites in the basement or shared housing in a carriage house or a granny flat,” he said. “That would solve maybe half the problems. Let people have the option of adding suites.”

For more information about the tiny home project or if you can help in any way, please call McDougall at 250-306-3275.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.vernonmorningstar.com/lifestyles/367882851.html>

## Aboriginal Politics

### Prominent indigenous women's advocate joins NDP race in Winnipeg

**JULIEN GIGNAC**

The Globe and Mail

Published Monday, Feb. 08, 2016 12:45PM EST

Last updated Monday, Feb. 08, 2016 12:45PM EST

A prominent advocate who has advised the Manitoba government on indigenous women's issues for years is now seeking a seat in the legislature.

Nahanni Fontaine announced Friday she would run for the New Democratic Party nomination in the Winnipeg riding of St. Johns, becoming the second high-profile indigenous person to join the race for the NDP this week. On Tuesday, Wab Kinew, author, former CBC broadcaster and associate vice-president of indigenous affairs at the University of Winnipeg, declared his intention to run in the riding of Fort Rouge.

Ms. Fontaine will face at least two others for the nomination in the lead up to the provincewide April 19 election.

A breadth of experience and knowledge “makes me a well-rounded candidate,” said Ms. Fontaine, who paid tribute to NDP Premier Greg Selinger for supporting her work for more than five years.

She has worked on the issue of Canada's missing and murdered indigenous women for roughly 18 years. She was the director of justice for Manitoba's Southern Chiefs Organization and in 2013 received the Governor-General's Award in Commemoration of the Persons Case. She also worked as an environmental researcher on her home reserve of Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation – a rural Manitoba community that has lost several indigenous women to violence.

She became an advocate for women after grappling with trauma caused by sexual abuse at an early age and addiction issues. She looks at the past not as a hindrance but as a way forward. It gives her a special connection to other people who have struggled, she said.

"My story isn't that different from many Canadians, many global citizens," she said. "A myriad of women are sexually assaulted. The teaching of my childhood is that I'm able to relate with everyone I come into contact with. It's a blessing."

Behind her run is a desire to see strong voices representing indigenous people in all levels of politics and to show indigenous youth the possibilities available to them.

"I'm a mother of two boys," she said. "I want them to know the realm of opportunity and what women can do. The opportunities are here."

She said her agenda will be formed and guided by those she represents.

"The issues I'll tackle will be with the advice of my constituents."

The governing NDP are trailing the Liberals and Progressive Conservatives in polls. Many blame the NDP for an unpopular provincial sales tax that took hold in 2013.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/prominent-indigenous-womens-advocate-joins-ndp-race-in-winnipeg/article28646202/>

## Manitoba political parties court indigenous candidates ahead of election

### 7 indigenous candidates running for Liberals, 6 running for NDP and 5 for PCs

[CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 05, 2016 10:19 PM CT Last Updated: Feb 09, 2016 3:27 PM CT



Althea Guiboche, left, is running for the Manitoba Liberal Party in Point Douglas. Nahanni Fontaine is running for the New Democratic Party nomination in the St. Johns constituency.

At least 18 indigenous candidates will run between the Manitoba New Democratic, Liberal and Progressive Conservative parties in the upcoming provincial election — a number up slightly from the 2011 election.

The NDP intend to field at least six indigenous candidates (up two from the last election), while the Liberals aim to run a minimum of seven (up one from 2011) and the Tories are running at least five indigenous candidates.

On Tuesday, University of Winnipeg associate vice-president of indigenous affairs Wab Kinew threw his hat in the ring for the NDP. Kinew, who is also a former CBC journalist, is running uncontested in the Fort Rouge constituency in Winnipeg.

A few days later Nahanni Fontaine, the Manitoba government special advisor on aboriginal women's issues, announced she, too, would be stepping up to the plate for the NDP. Fontaine is hoping to take over for Gord Mackintosh in the St. Johns constituency, following the [justice minister's announcement last week that he would be pulling out of the race.](#)

Kinew and Fontaine join Assiniboia candidate Joe McKellep, finance minister and Selkirk MLA Greg Dewar, The Pas representative Amanda Lathlin and Kevin Chief, who is the current jobs and economy minister and MLA for Point Douglas.

Chief is up against indigenous candidate Althea Guiboche. [Also known as the "Bannock Lady,"](#) Guiboche is running for the Liberals in Point Douglas.

Guiboche said she is hopeful having more indigenous voices at the table will make a difference.

"Get our people ahead a little bit, get Manitoba into honouring all their people — everybody counts," she said.

Six other indigenous candidates are running for the Liberals across the province, including Jordan Fleury in Riding Mountain, Judy Klassen in Kewatinook, Leslie Beck in Flin Flon, Noel Bernier in St. Johns, Stefan Jones in Selkirk and Tyler Duncan in The Pas.

Niigaan Sinclair, acting head of the native studies department at the University of Manitoba, said regardless of the party, having more indigenous candidates involved will influence public policy.

"It's not a slam-dunk vote — you still have to deliver the policies," Sinclair, who has shown support for Kinew and Guiboche, said Friday.

"I certainly see ... it being advantageous [for any party] to appeal to indigenous voters, to include indigenous people."

Sinclair added that having more indigenous candidates will put party leaders on alert to include indigenous issues in their platforms.

The Manitoba Progressive Conservatives say they will run at least five indigenous candidates, including:

- Bob Lagasse — Dawson Trail.
- Sarah Langevin — Elmwood.

- Alan Lagimodiere — Selkirk.
- Belinda Squance — Minto.
- Edna Nabess — Keewatinook.

Manitoba's 41st provincial election is scheduled for April 19. Candidates have until March 29 to file nomination papers.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/manitoba-provincial-election-indigenous-candidates-1.3436927>

## **John Ralston Saul: Indigenous Peoples don't need sympathy, they need you to take action**



John Ralston Saul's latest book, *The Comeback*, offers a condensed history of issues affecting Indigenous Peoples. (courtesy John Ralston Saul)

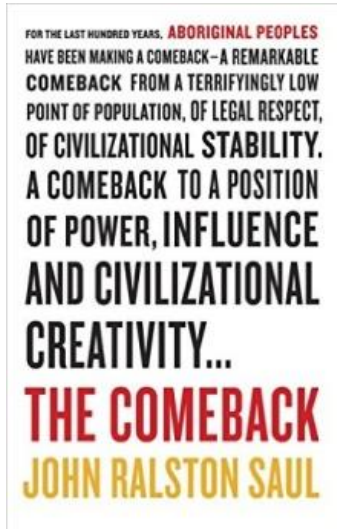
Sunday February 07, 2016

John Ralston Saul is an award-winning essayist, novelist and philosopher, but at the height of Idle No More, he was compelled to lend his pen to the issues affecting Indigenous Peoples, creating *The Comeback*.

In other words, he decided to act.

But this wasn't the first time Saul dedicated his attention to the topic of indigenous issues. In 2008, he published *A Fair Country*, a book that explores the influence Indigenous Peoples had on the shape of what Canada had become — without being given any credit.

"I thought I'd done my thing, I thought I'd said what I had to say on the subject ... and then things really didn't move. And then Idle No More happened, and I thought this was the most fantastic breakthrough. And I felt that I had to make another attempt at talking to non-indigenous Canadians."



The Comeback went through 28 drafts, which is 20 more than Saul usually writes. (courtesy John Ralston Saul)

With a federal election on the horizon, Saul wrote and published *The Comeback* to share a simple message: "This is the single most important issue in the country.... You should be paying attention, you should be speaking up, you should be deciding who you'll vote for on the basis of what political parties say they will do on this big, enormous issue."

Saul added he was also inspired by people around him who identified with the spirit of Idle No More but didn't know where to take it, or how to channel their desire to get involved.

"They didn't have the language, they didn't have the arguments, they didn't have the mythologies," he said. "They knew it meant something important but they didn't know how to express it in their own terms."

## Taking it back to treaties

Digging into the deep history of treaties, Saul sought advice from indigenous authors and elders and drew on writings from leading indigenous thinkers to offer non-indigenous Canadians a primer of this country's history — a history he himself didn't learn about until he reached adulthood.

"For about 125 years, give or take, the Canadian government has acted extremely badly — even in a way which should be called evil — breaking treaties, breaking agreements," he said. "At a certain point, you have to turn around and say, it really isn't good enough for citizens to say 'I feel so badly about what happened.' It's a way of getting out of doing something."

Saul said his hope for the book, and speaking engagements that came after it was published, was to motivate others to turn that sympathy into action, by voting for parties based on their willingness to act on these issues.

"I think that if you insist on sympathy you're trying to avoid action, and that's when I say it becomes a new form of racism," Saul said.

"Because you're avoiding reality, you're avoiding what actually needs to be done for people who have every right, every constitutional, historic and treaty right to these things and are not getting them."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/building-an-ally-non-indigenous-people-share-their-stories-of-bridge-building-1.3430628/john-ralston-saul-indigenous-peoples-don-t-need-sympathy-they-need-you-to-take-action-1.3435362>

February 5, 2016 6:09 pm

## B.C. Indigenous woman makes her mark in Canadian politics

By Willow Fiddler Global News



Melanie Mark in her Vancouver-Mount Pleasant constituency.

Courtesy of Melanie Mark

The B.C. legislature will resume sitting next week when the Throne Speech is delivered, and newly elected MLA Melanie Mark will be at watching from the gallery.



She hasn't been officially sworn-in as a member of legislature yet, but the fact that Mark will even be in the legislative building carries historical significance for the Nisga'a citizen.

Mark made history this week when she became the first First Nations female to be elected to the B.C. legislature – a win celebrated not just by her constituency, but by First Nations people and supporters all over.

“Today is another milestone in the history of the Nisga'a people and for aboriginal women across British Columbia,” said H. Mitchell Stevens, President of Nisga'a Lisims Government, in a statement.

It should come as no surprise to anyone that the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the government has been a strained one.

In 1887, the Nisga'a nation was pushing the B.C. government to recognize their right to land title. According to a historical timeline on the Nisga'a Lisims Government website, a group of Nisga'a chiefs traveled by water to meet with the provincial government in legislature. When they arrived, they were “turned away on the steps of legislature by Premier William Smithe.”

In 1927, the Canadian government had amended the Indian Act that year – making it illegal to raise money and hire legal counsel to advance aboriginal title claims – with the Nisga'a no closer to reaching an agreement.

In B.C., status Indians weren't allowed to vote provincially until 1949, and across Canada, status Indians weren't allowed to vote in federal elections until 1960.

It was in 1949 that Frank Calder, a Nisga'a hereditary chief, became the first First Nations person to be elected into the B.C. legislature. But it wouldn't be until 1978 that Len Marchand, a member of the Okanagan Indian Band, became the first Indigenous member in the House of Commons.

It will be people like Mark who ensure the history books don't look as bleak another 100 years from now.

“It’s always scary, as you can imagine, to stand up and fight power when you don’t come from privilege,” Mark said at a campaign event. “And people say if you’re a leader you can’t be emotional.”

However, Mark said she can’t wait to fight.

“This isn’t my first rodeo,” said the 40-year old of Nisga’a, Gitksan, Ojibway and Cree ancestry. She joins Jody Wilson-Raybould, the first Indigenous female Minister of Justice, and Carole James, the first Metis MLA, as prominent Indigenous politicians in B.C. “It’s exciting to see that happen with Indigenous women in B.C. and Manitoba,” says Wab Kinew.

Kinew, an acclaimed Indigenous educator, author and activist, is one of an increasing number of First Nations people to throw his hat into the ring of Canadian politics. This week he announced his candidacy for the Manitoba NDP in this year’s provincial election.

Recalling his father’s involvement in politics, Kinew said his father and other Indigenous activists had to advocate in a system that didn’t allow First Nations to vote.

“It’s important to have strong First Nations leadership, but we need Indigenous voice in parliament.”

Kinew added it was Ovide Mercredi, a former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations and current president of the NDP party of Manitoba, who encouraged him to enter mainstream politics instead of First Nations politics.

“It’s a positive sign of a growing acumen in the Indigenous community,” Kinew said. “We need people at every level of government, at every table, in a way that represents their own beliefs – our people are diverse.”

**Direct Link:** <http://globalnews.ca/news/2501466/2501466/>

## **Aboriginal Affairs Minister Eric Robinson to run for re-election with NDP**

## Robinson earns nomination to represent Keewatinook constituency for Manitoba New Democrats

[CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 09, 2016 7:40 PM CT Last Updated: Feb 09, 2016 7:40 PM CT



Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Minister Eric Robinson is running for re-election with the NDP this spring. (CBC)

The minister of aboriginal and northern affairs has thrown his hat back in the ring ahead of the provincial election.

The Manitoba NDP announced Tuesday Eric Robinson will seek re-election with the party this spring as a representative in the Keewatinook constituency.

"Eric has been a strong voice for indigenous peoples and the north for over 20 years, and we are proud Eric is running to continue to make northern Manitoba a better place," Selinger said in a statement Tuesday.

"Eric understands the challenges that indigenous communities face and is focused on creating more educational and job opportunities so that young people can build a brighter future."

Robinson is from Cross Lake First Nation (otherwise known as Pimicikamak Cree Nation) in northern Manitoba.

Manitobans head to the polls April 19.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/manitoba-minister-eric-robinson-runs-for-ndp-1.3441295>

## UNDRIP and repairing relationship top priorities for incoming Alberta Indigenous relations minister

[National News](#) | February 9, 2016 by [Brandi Morin](#)



**(Indigenous Relations Minister Richard Feehan during swearing-in ceremony. photo handout)**

**Brandi Morin**

**APTN National News**

The recently appointed Indigenous Relations minister in Alberta said the first thing on his list to tackle will be implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

“Absolutely it’s a big deal- UNDRIP is one of the major pieces and the groundwork has already been done,” said Indigenous Relations Minister Richard Feehan. “We don’t want to lose any time at all because there’s been a switch in ministers.”

Richard Feehan takes the portfolio from Justice Minister Kathleen Ganley, who spent the last 9 months juggling both portfolios.

“I was very privileged to have the premier put some faith in me that I could move ahead with a lot of the great work that’s already been done by Minister Ganley. I was pretty delighted to be given this opportunity and looking forward to it. There’s pretty exciting times ahead,” he said.

Feehan said the change reflects the priorities of Alberta Premier Rachel Notley and that she wanted full-time attention given to the area of Indigenous relations.

“She (Notley) started with a small cabinet and they did that so they could have a good focus beginning and relationship as they move forward on important initiatives,” he said. “One of the things they learned in doing that was there was some pieces of the work we wanted to emphasize.”

With the deadline drawing near for MLA’s to present their plans to incorporate UNDRIP into their portfolios to the premier, Feehan doesn’t believe his late arrival on the scene will hinder the outcome.

“My primary job is going to be to start to get out in the communities and begin to visit everyone,” he said. “Of course we’ve invited chiefs and councils from across the province to also make submissions (on UNDRIP). So there are a lot of people who’ve done the work.”

Like many NDP MLAs, Feehan is serving his first term as an elected member of the Alberta Legislature. He previously worked as a social worker throughout the province for almost 30 years.

With the high number of Indigenous children and families involved with social services and child welfare Feehan said he has a unique understanding of the challenges they face.

“In social work the Indigenous population is a significant part of the overall population, there’s lots of contact (and) that includes people probably from almost every reserve in one nature or another,” he said.

Repairing the relationship between Indigenous People and the Alberta government will also be a priority. Much of his efforts will be spent building trust and working on reconciliation, he said.

“What we want though is that the relationship we’re building between the two large groups—that is the province and all the nations—for that to continue to move forward. That’s where it’s really important,” he said.

**Direct Link:** <http://aptn.ca/news/2016/02/09/undrip-and-repairing-relationship-top-priorities-for-incoming-alberta-indigenous-relations-minister/>

## **PM Trudeau meeting with Indigenous leaders, premiers in March**

National News | February 11, 2016 by APTN National News



## **APTN National News**

**OTTAWA**—Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is scheduled to meet with Indigenous leaders and premiers in Vancouver early next month to discuss climate change, the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement posted on its website.

Trudeau is scheduled to meet with Indigenous leaders representing Inuit, Metis and First Nations, in Vancouver on March 2.

The prime minister is then scheduled to meet with provincial and territorial premiers the next day in the city.

"Canada's Indigenous peoples have a sacred relationship with the Earth. Their unique perspective will help guide us in developing policies that ensure our land, air and water are protected for future generations," said Trudeau, in the statement.

The PMO release stated that the planned meetings are a "follow up to the commitments made on climate change" during the Paris conference which finalized a global deal on curbing greenhouse gasses in hopes of slowing down the planet's warming.

The meetings will discuss developing a "pan-Canadian framework" to grow the economy while meeting emission reduction targets.

**Direct Link:** <http://aptn.ca/news/2016/02/11/pm-trudeau-meeting-with-indigenous-leaders-premiers-in-march/>

## **Status Indian player barred from All Native sports event**

**Committee says Josiah Wilson doesn't have First Nation 'bloodlines'**

By Betsy Trumpener, [CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 10, 2016 4:09 PM PT Last Updated: Feb 11, 2016 8:17 AM PT



"I love basketball," says Josiah Wilson. "To come after me and tell me I can't play, that really hurt me. It's probably the best feeling in the world to be up there at All Native with my cousins, my family, playing basketball with a lot of the different tribes." (Facebook)

Organizers of an all First Nations sports event in B.C. are being accused of racism and discrimination for benching a status Indian player who is black.

Organizers of the [All Native Basketball Tournament](#) say Josiah Wilson can't compete because he doesn't have First Nations ancestry or "bloodlines."

## Adopted as infant in Haiti

Wilson, a point guard with the Heiltsuk Wolf Pack team, is of Haitian descent. He was adopted as an infant in Haiti and raised by a Heiltsuk First Nation family in Canada.

Now, Wilson's been barred from play. Instead of competing with his team and 400 other indigenous athletes from B.C. and Alaska in Prince Rupert this week in front of thousands of fans, he is at home in Calgary.

"I was kinda shocked," said Wilson, 20. "It hurts. It hurts. I've been part of the Heiltsuk tribe. I've lived up in Bella Bella, I've played basketball with the team, engaged with the community. Now this All Native committee is telling me I'm not native at all. I'm like, 'What?' I'd say [it's] racist."



Josiah Wilson, held as an infant by his grandfather, Papa Don, was adopted at five months by a Heiltsuk doctor working in Haiti. (Facebook)

Peter Haugen, the president of the board for the All Native Basketball Tournament, declined to comment.

[A letter sent to Wilson](#) by the tournament rules committee chairman and obtained by CBC News states, "All players must be of North American indigenous ancestry/bloodlines i.e. 1/8th First Nations ancestry."



## 'Extremely insulting'

"We saw it as extremely insulting," Josiah's father, Dr. Don Wilson, told CBC News. "It's upholding that abhorrent notion that blood quantum or DNA or birth is what defines us as indigenous people, and it absolutely is not."

Wilson is a Calgary obstetrician and status Indian from the Heiltsuk First Nation. He was working in Haiti in the 1990s when he adopted Josiah, then five months old.



Josiah Wilson is a point guard with the Heiltsuk First Nation basketball team, the Wolf Pack. (Liette Wilson)

Wilson says the Heiltsuk First Nation has a long-standing tradition of adoption that tournament organizers must acknowledge.

"We do not make a distinction between our children," said Wilson. "They're all ours. We as the Heiltsuk Nation accept my son as one of us."

Wilson said Josiah is legally adopted, is registered with the Heiltsuk First Nation and has a status Indian card. He said Josiah was allowed to compete at All Native with his team for several years.

A letter from All Native organizers states concerns were raised this year, and that Wilson's birthplace and adoptive status make him ineligible to play.

## 'I love All Native'

"It actually really hurt me," said Josiah. "I love basketball. To come after me and tell me I can't play, that really hurt me. I love the All Native tournament. It's probably the best feeling in the world to be up there with my cousins, my family, to play basketball with a lot of the different tribes and members."



Josiah Wilson and his father, Dr. Don Wilson, are both status Indians and members of B.C.'s Heiltsuk First Nation. (Facebook)

Josiah acknowledges his situation is unique.

"When I was younger, visiting my grandparents, my sister and I would be the only two black kids on the reserve. People kinda question me and they're like, 'For reals?' And I have to pull out my status card and show them, and they're like, 'Wow, that's cool,' said Josiah. "I'm black, I'm from the Caribbean, but at the same time I'm part of the Heiltsuk Nation. I consider myself one of them."



Josiah Wilson was allowed to play in the All Native Basketball Tournament in previous years. (Facebook)

Dr. Wilson says his push to have Josiah reinstated has drawn widespread support from the Heiltsuk First Nation and on social media. Wilson hopes to change the ruling through discussion, but says he has consulted a lawyer and the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal.

"I want to shield my son," he said, "and protect him from the impact of this discrimination."

Many indigenous leaders support the right of First Nations to define membership on their own terms. But the concept of blood quantum to include or exclude First Nations people is controversial. Indigenous scholar Pam Palmater has written extensively about blood quantum. In a [recent scholarly article](#), she calls it "part of colonial legislation" and a "racist criteria that only serve[s] state attempts to assimilate indigenous peoples."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/black-status-indian-barred-from-event-over-bloodlines-1.3442490>

## **Kady: Jody Wilson-Raybould 'taking all steps' to dodge conflict over husband's lobbying gig**

KADY O'MALLEY, OTTAWA CITIZEN

Published on: February 11, 2016 | Last Updated: February 11, 2016 11:37 AM EST



Minister of Justice Jody Wilson-Raybould. JUSTIN TANG / THE CANADIAN PRESS

Well, that's one topic crossed off the list of appropriate dinnertime discussions at the Wilson-Raybould household.

Late last month, BC public policy consultant Tim Raybould — whose wife of eight years now serves as Justin Trudeau's justice minister — filed the necessary

paperwork to help two First Nations organizations in their future dealings with the federal government.

According to his filings, Raybould will represent the First Nations Finance Authority and the Westbank First Nation on a variety of fiscal and financial issues, including transfer arrangements, fiscal management and, in the case of the FNFA, the expansion of an existing credit enhancement fund.

He'll be focusing his efforts on two key departments — Finance Canada and Indigenous and Northern Affairs — but will not be engaging with Justice, or any other entity that falls under his wife's ministerial responsibilities.

As long as he keeps well away from her portfolio, there's no law that forbids him from working as a registered lobbyist.

Even so, the minister has already discussed the matter with the federal ethics watchdog to make sure both she and her husband are operating well within the letter and spirit of the law.

"I take my ethical obligations very seriously and am taking all steps to avoid any conflicts of interest and more importantly prevent the perception of one," she told the Ottawa Citizen in a written statement.

"That's why my husband and I met with the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner to ensure we are fully in compliance with our obligations under the rules."

Under the *Conflict of Interest Act*, Raybould may be required to file a public declaration of recusal from discussions that could touch on those specific areas — although that and any other possible compliance measures will be ultimately be decided based on the recommendation of the ethics commissioner. If she does, the details will be posted to the public registry along with the rest of the minister's disclosure filings.

Tim Raybould — who holds a PhD from the University of Cambridge — acted as chief negotiator for the Westbank First Nation for 12 years before hanging out his shingle as president of the Kalona Group in 1998, according to his profile on the LinkedIn business networking site.

Between 2010 and 2011, he was registered to lobby on behalf of several First Nations, including Westbank, Tsawwassen and the Beaverlake Cree Nation, as well as the First Nations Finance Authority, which was then in the process of setting up the credit fund that he will now be urging the government to increase.

He currently offers a wide range of services to First Nation governments, institutions "and other organizations related to public administration and policy development," including "research, training, facilitation and mediation, negotiation support and intergovernmental relations."

**Direct Link:** <http://ottawacitizen.com/news/politics/kady-jody-wilson-raybould-taking-all-steps-to-dodge-conflict-over-husbands-lobbying-gig>

## Aboriginal Sports

# Nation2Nation basketball game promotes aboriginal culture

**Simonds High School to host girls game against team from Eskasoni First Nation in Cape Breton**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 06, 2016 7:00 AM AT Last Updated: Feb 06, 2016 7:00 AM AT



The Simonds Seabees Varsity Girls, pictured here, will play the Chief Allison Bernard Memorial High School team from Eskasoni First Nation on Saturday. (Courtesy Jason Peters)

A high school basketball game in Saint John this Saturday is aiming to build ties between First Nations and non-First Nations communities.

Simonds High School is hosting the inaugural Nation2Nation Varsity Girls challenge against the Chief Allison Bernard Memorial High School from Eskasoni First Nation, in Cape Breton.

Jason Peters coaches the Simonds Seabees varsity girls and organized the event to foster a greater cultural understanding at the school.

"The Mi'kmaq and Maliseet were the original people of the area and aboriginal people are the fastest growing demographic in Canada, and a lot of people don't know that. So it's important that we develop these relationships now," Peters said in an interview on *Information Morning Saint John*.

"Sport is the ultimate equalizer, so [I thought] that would be a really nice venue to have these competitions take place."

Peters, who is Mi'kmaq, says he already combines Mi'kmaq teachings into the team's practices. The players learned the Mi'kmaq honour song, as well as some Mi'kmaq history and language.

"We incorporate a bit of a warrior mentality where we don't give up. We could be down by 40 or 50 points and we're still coming at the other team," said Peters.

"Much like in life you're faced with ups and downs, so it's really important if you have a goal that you stick to it, and you try to perform your best to get to that goal."

## Community perspective

Peters says his cultural background also influences the way he coaches. Rather than approach the game at a win-at-all-costs perspective, he makes a point to put all his players on the court.

"I think it's more of a community perspective ... I think they come out knowing they may not be the strongest ball player in the world, but at least they're going to learn over the season by actually having floor time," he said.

"It's one thing to learn in practice, it's another to test your skills during a game."

The Nation2Nation challenge starts at 1 p.m. on Saturday.

Peters says the money will go to the Eskasoni team's travel expenses. Any additional funds raised from admissions will be split between the two schools and be used to fund a scholarship.

"My goal is to have a tournament next year where we're able to bring in three or four different First Nations high schools from around the region and hopefully be able to provide scholarships with the money we make off this," he said.

"I can think of no better way to end the season for both teams than with a positive, culturally based competition that would be a great learning opportunity for all."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/simonds-nations2nations-basketball-1.3428415>

# Energy, the Environment & Natural Resources

# Doug Cuthand: First Nations must be partners in resource development

DOUG CUTHAND, SASKATOON STARPHOENIX

Published on: February 6, 2016 | Last Updated: February 6, 2016 5:35 AM CST



Doug Cuthand LIAM RICHARDS / SASKATOON STARPHOENIX

Under new rules for development of energy projects First Nations must be involved in the discussions on a nation-to-nation basis. The Supreme Court also has mandated that governments have a duty to consult with First Nations on resource projects within traditional aboriginal territory.

Business fears this will constitute a veto, and that First Nations will doom future resource development. We get the same knee-jerk reaction from the business community and right-wing commentators each time our jurisdiction or treaty and aboriginal rights are recognized.

Currently, the federal or provincial governments can deny any environmentally risky resource project, in effect giving them a veto. What's wrong with allowing First Nations governments the same right?

The problem is that business sees First Nations as an impediment to progress, and thinks they will say no if they have the opportunity. As things stand, business is partially correct. First Nations across Canada have reviewed energy and resource projects and found them wanting in revenue sharing, employment and business opportunities.

The history of First Nations involvement in resource development has seen our people pulled between the business community and environmentalists. This has not been to our benefit, and it doesn't advance our agenda. Both sides automatically



assume their position is what's best for us. However, First Nations have a two-pronged agenda.

On the one hand we have a close connection to the land and want to protect the environment. On the other, we need to be involved and cannot be left behind. Our people need jobs, and our communities need income. We need to participate in resource development by building up our businesses and through resource revenue sharing. If First Nations take their rightful place at the negotiating table, then we are in an excellent position to maximize our involvement and make our environmental concerns known.

Up to now, "consultation" has been used to describe the relationship between First Nations and the provincial and federal governments. The Tories would try to their sales pitch and be upset when our leaders didn't buy it. They would call their one-sided pitch consultation.

"Consultation" must be changed to negotiation. If government and business want to move oil through our territory or develop resources, then they should pay for it. If they are likely to mess up the environment, then they must be monitored and plans made for reclamation.

Consultation is a weak and vague term. It can be interpreted as simply one side telling the other what it plans to do. Negotiation, however, carries real action and the ability to effect change. Our participation must be serious, with business opportunities such as those we have in mines in Northern Saskatchewan.

Our people have shown they are a reliable workforce when they are treated properly. A few years ago, when the oil boom was on in Alberta, a lot of the workers in our province's northern mines moved on to the oilpatch. But the aboriginal workers, who have roots in the northern communities, stayed put. That should be a clear message to the employers. We are the stay-at-home workers.

The treaties between the Crown and the First Nations were meant to open the door for settlement. We were told we would share the land, and for some time our people hunted, trapped and fished unimpeded. However, as settlement increased First Nations were gradually pushed aside. We are an important part of Saskatchewan today, and cannot be ignored any longer.

The provincial government must open the door to resource revenue sharing and raise the standard of living for First Nations people. Resource revenue would give our people the financial resources to participate in the provincial economy through business development or acquisition.

We will never catch up to the housing backlog, for example, without increased income and a major cash infusion. Economic independence will allow some of our people the opportunity to build homes.

Meaningful resource development that includes our people as partners instead of paupers is the future. The interests of environmentalists and the business

community will have to take a back seat to our agenda, which doesn't have to be at odds with their needs.

Direct Link: <http://thestarphoenix.com/opinion/columnists/0205-edit-cuthand-col>

## Pipeline review changes won't stall B.C.'s LNG 'dream': Clark



Emily Chan, CTVNews.ca  
Published Sunday, February 7, 2016 11:00AM EST

Recent changes to the Canadian pipeline review process won't slow down British Columbia's liquefied natural gas push, according to Premier Christy Clark.

After meeting with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Friday, Clark said the province is "comfortable" with the revamped review process, and that it is pleased the new conditions won't cause delays for LNG.

The revised process, which was [announced at the end of January](#), will require pipeline reviews to include consultation with First Nations and consider future greenhouse gasses.

To accommodate for the extra requirements, the federal government pushed back the decision deadlines for the TransMountain and Energy East pipelines, which are currently under review. But the changes won't affect the timeline for LNG, [Clark told CTV's Question Period](#).

"There's some substantive change, but the most important thing for us is that there won't be delays," she said. "(The federal government is) really enthusiastic about making our LNG dream in British Columbia come to life."

B.C. is currently trying to build a system to transport natural gas from the province's northeast to the Pacific Coast, where it can then be shipped to Asia.

[The province hopes](#) to have three LNG plants in operation by 2020.

Clark says the project is a potential economic windfall for her province. According to her government's website, five LNG plants [could contribute an estimated \\$1 trillion](#) to B.C.'s GDP.

But critics say the project poses environmental risks.

"The potential carbon pollution from the LNG facilities and associated shale gas extraction and processing would make B.C.'s climate targets unachievable," a [Pembina Institute](#) assessment says. "And (LNG) would make it exceedingly difficult for Canada to meet its national 2020 target."

In addition to concerns about emissions, some environmental and First Nations groups [also say LNG development could threaten unique ecosystems](#), including a crucial salmon habitat in the province's northwest.

In response, the B.C. government is promoting LNG as the "cleanest burning fossil fuel," and a friendlier alternative to the coal which is burned overseas.

"There are 150 coal plants on the books today in China that are going to be built," Clark said. "The only way we're going to stop the next 150 is if China gets the cleanest fossil fuel on the planet. And that's natural gas from British Columbia."

#### **TransMountain pipeline still 'possible'**

While Clark's government has championed LNG, it's shown more reluctance towards the [proposed TransMountain pipeline expansion](#), which would carry oil from the Alberta oil sands to the B.C. coast.

The project [has met heavy opposition](#) from some First Nations groups, environmentalists, and municipal leaders in British Columbia.

But Clark says there's still a chance it could be built. "I think it's possible," she said. The B.C. government has [set out five conditions](#) for proposed heavy oil pipelines. The conditions include plans for "world leading" spill responses and prevention, legal requirements for indigenous and treaty rights, and that B.C. receives a "fair share" of the pipeline's economic benefits.

Clark said Kinder Morgan has yet to satisfy those conditions for its TransMountain proposal—but that there is still time to do so.

"We don't support the project now because they haven't met (the conditions) yet, but when they do we're going to have a different conversation," she said. "My intention was never to say 'We want these conditions to be so impossible to meet that we're really saying no.'"

**Direct Link:** <http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/pipeline-review-changes-won-t-stall-b-c-s-lng-dream-clark-1.2768107>

# Western First Nations launch \$3B lawsuit over aboriginal oil



Oil pump

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Bob Weber, The Canadian Press  
Published Tuesday, February 9, 2016 1:08PM EST  
Last Updated Tuesday, February 9, 2016 5:18PM EST

Lawyers behind a lawsuit over a long-simmering dispute concerning what two First Nations call federal mishandling of energy resources on their reserves say other bands are considering joining the legal action.

In a statement filed late Monday, the Onion Lake and Poundmaker Cree bands accused Indian Oil and Gas Canada of failing to promote and develop energy resources on their lands and of failing to protect those resources from being drained by wells adjacent to them.

Harvey Strosberg, one of two lawyers representing the bands, said he's opened talks with other bands interested in joining the lawsuit.

"We want the court to make it into a class action," said Strosberg.

"We've talked to at least another Five Nations and they are very supportive. Some of them are in the process of retaining us."

Because aboriginal bands are not allowed to disburse reserve lands, energy companies seeking to develop the oil and gas beneath them must deal with Indian Oil and Gas Canada.

That agency is responsible for promoting development, negotiating deals, issuing licences, collecting royalties and monitoring activity.

Because the bands can't do the work themselves, the agency is obliged to look after First Nations interests, said Strosberg.

"The Indian nations can't do anything. They have to pass this off to the federal government. (The government) said, 'You can't do it yourself ... we'll take care of you.'"

Figures in the statement of claim -- which contains allegations not yet tested in court -- question that care.

The claim alleges there have been 41 wells drilled on Poundmaker lands with 10 producing. That compares with 242 wells -- with 86 producing -- immediately adjacent to the Saskatchewan reserve.

The situation is similar for Onion Lake, which straddles the Saskatchewan-Alberta boundary, says the statement.

"The (agency) did not actively promote and solicit leasing opportunities to exploit the oil and gas rights on the designated reserve lands."

As well, the statement of claim says oil and gas pools flow underground in response to pumping activity. It claims Ottawa didn't protect resources under reserve lands from being drained by wells adjacent to them.

"If you have 100 wells pumping on the adjacent property and 10 wells pumping on the reserve, you'll drain more than your share," Strosberg said.

The statement also asks for a full audit of Indian Oil and Gas Canada's handling of First Nation energy revenues. The lawsuit claims \$3 billion in damages.

The agency has long been a target of First Nations, said Blaine Favel, former head of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, now head of an oil and gas company.

"This is archaic, colonial law," he said. "(Criticism) has been around as long as they've been the regulator."

Favel said the agency has long been under-resourced and isn't keeping up with the demands of the modern industry. As well, it serves as regulator, license issuer, land manager, royalty collector and watchdog -- far too many roles for one office.

"These are delicate at best and sometimes incompatible," said Favel.

Strosberg said he hopes the federal government will choose to negotiate a settlement.

"If you want to fight, we'll fight, but if you want to talk, we'll talk," he said. "We prefer to talk."

Assembly of First Nations Grand Chief Perry Bellegarde also encouraged the government to settle.

"Based on our natural resource wealth, First Nations should be among the wealthiest in Canada, but federal mismanagement and neglect of its fiduciary duties has resulted in lost revenue for First Nations, perpetuating a cycle of poverty," he said in a statement.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.ctvnews.ca/business/western-first-nations-launch-3b-lawsuit-over-aboriginal-oil-1.2770850>

# BCGEU signs solidarity accord with First Nations against Northern Gateway pipeline

BY

**ALYSE KOTYK**

| FEBRUARY 9, 2016



The B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU) has signed a solidarity accord with Indigenous nations opposing pipelines in their territories.

**The accord** affirms the **Save the Fraser Declaration**, an Indigenous law signed by representatives of over 100 First Nations that states it "will not allow the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipelines, or similar Tar Sands projects, to cross [Indigenous] lands, territories and watersheds, or the ocean migration routes of Fraser River salmon."

Last month, the **B.C. Supreme Court ruled** that the provincial government had failed in its duty to consult with Indigenous groups on the Northern Gateway pipeline.

"We agree with the recent ruling of the B.C. Supreme Court that the Province has not met its duty to consult with First Nations on Enbridge's Northern Gateway," said Paul Finch, BCGEU Treasurer in a statement. "We are proud to support the Save the Fraser Declaration, which demonstrates the resolve of First Nations in refusing consent for Northern Gateway."

The BCGEU has 65,000 members, many of whom work directly with the government. This significant number joins other labour unions including Unifor and the B.C. Teachers' Federation as well as businesses, environmental groups and community groups.

"BCGEU's endorsement of the Save the Fraser Declaration is indicative that more and more Canadians are committing to respect the laws and authority of First Nations and their efforts to protect the environment, fishers and the health and safety of all B.C. communities from Enbridge's Northern Gateway and other tar sands projects," **said** Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs.

The proposed Northern Gateway pipeline is a multi-billion dollar project that involves a new twin pipeline system for export of bitumen, running from near Edmonton, Alberta, to Kitimat B.C.

"Premier Clark and Prime Minister Trudeau be advised: the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway is dead, dead, dead," said Phillip. "We call on you to stand with us, and to work with us to come up with alternatives for real change."

*Alyse Kotyk is a Vancouver-based writer and editor with a passion for social justice and storytelling. She studied English Literature and Global Development at Queen's University and*

*is excited by media that digs deep, asks questions and shares narratives. Alyse was the Editor of Servants Quarters and has written for the Queen's News Centre, Quietly Media and the Vancouver Observer. She is now rabble's News Intern.*

**Direct Link:** <http://rabble.ca/news/2016/02/bcgeu-signs-solidarity-accord-first-nations-against-northern-gateway-pipeline>

## Natural resources minister promises First Nations collaboration on development



Minister of Natural Resources Jim Carr responds to a question during Question Period in the House of Commons Wednesday December 9, 2015 in Ottawa. (Adrian Wylde/THE CANADIAN PRESS)

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Laura Kane, The Canadian Press  
Published Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:40PM EST  
Last Updated Wednesday, February 10, 2016 6:05PM EST

VANCOUVER -- Canada's natural resources minister is promising a new relationship with First Nations on energy development and indigenous leaders are expressing cautious optimism about the new Liberal government's tone.

Jim Carr told a forum organized by the Assembly of First Nations on Wednesday that Aboriginal Peoples will be consulted meaningfully on resource projects and decisions will be based on science.

"We've opened the door for a new way of doing things, and I want to invite you in," he told the crowd. "I'm asking you to seize this opportunity, to change the language on resource development, to strive for consensus."

The forum in Vancouver is bringing together First Nations from across the country to set priorities for working with the energy industry. The visit marked Carr's first official trip to British Columbia, where he met with provincial cabinet ministers.

Carr said the government wants to collaborate with indigenous communities to develop natural resources based on a low-carbon, sustainable energy economy.



He highlighted the government's introduction of interim environmental assessment rules for major resource projects, including Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain pipeline expansion and TransCanada's Energy East project.

The changes mean the government will do additional indigenous consultation on Trans Mountain after Ottawa receives a recommendation from the National Energy Board in May.

The projects are also to be assessed on greenhouse gas emissions produced in oil extraction and processing.

Carr said he plans to increase indigenous representation on the National Energy Board and look at best practices from around the world as environmental assessment is overhauled.

"We know that there will be no projects approved in Canada under the current regulatory scheme," he told reporters after the speech.

Carr said the record of pipeline infrastructure development since 2011 has not been a "particularly happy one," despite supportive governments in Alberta and Ottawa and \$100-a-barrel oil during that period.

"They didn't proceed because they couldn't carry the confidence of Canadians, and part of the reason was because indigenous people were not meaningfully consulted," he said.

"They have to be. They will be."

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs said he welcomes public statements that indicate good intentions of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government.

"However, at the end of the day, it's not so much what governments say, it's what they do," he said. "We've already seen evidence of where the Trudeau government has taken a shortcut with some cosmetic changes to the National Energy Board review process."

Additional consultation on Trans Mountain won't make a difference because the project has already been examined under a "broken" process, Phillip suggested.

Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day said he's sold on the Liberal government's message, but he expects it to turn into action.

"I'm skeptical of just talk, so, shortly after this, there's going to have to be a very clear reciprocation of those commitments from the prime minister directly."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/natural-resources-minister-promises-first-nations-collaboration-on-development-1.2772550>

# Canada's polar bear management is sound, Inuit tell U.S. government

**"Up-listing to Appendix 1 will be detrimental to our hunting activities"**

SARAH ROGERS, February 10, 2016 - 4:00 pm



From left, Makivik Corp.'s Adamie Delisle-Alaku and Gregor Gilbert; the Nunatsiavut Government's Jim Goudie; the Government of Nunavut representative Gabriel Nirlungayuk; and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami's John Cheechoo pose at the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington Feb. 9. The Inuit representatives are meeting with Canadian and American officials this week to discuss wildlife issues. (PHOTO COURTESY OF A. DELISLE-ALAKU)

Inuit representatives are on Capitol Hill in Washington this week to make a last ditch effort to convince their American counterparts to reconsider the way they think about polar bears.

The United States, as a member of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), has tried in 2010 and 2013 to up-list polar bears into an Appendix I classification — where they would be deemed in immediate danger of extinction.

An Appendix I listing would come with an automatic ban on all international trade of polar bear parts.

But in the months ahead of the next world wildlife conference of signatories to CITES, which will take place in South Africa in September, Inuit groups hope to convince the U.S. otherwise.

"This is really Canada making a last push to explain to the U.S. that up-listing to Appendix 1 will be detrimental to our hunting activities," said Adamie Delisle-Alaku, vice-president of renewable resources at Nunavik's Makivik Corp.

"It's really a last attempt."

Delisle-Alaku is joined in Washington this week by representatives from the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. the Nunatsiavut Government and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.

With the U.S. presidential primaries underway, Delisle-Alaku admits that it's not the best time to get the U.S. government's ear.

Still, Inuit representatives spent the day Feb. 9 in congressional meetings at the House of Representatives and with officials from the Council on Environmental Quality and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

"We presented what's going on with polar bears... how Canada has one of the best, if not the most robust, polar bear management [plans] in the world.," Delisle-Alaku said.

"It's the usual spiel; [we're saying] that polar bears are being used as an iconic poster child for climate change," he said, "and we need to differentiate the linkage between climate change and polar bear decline."

Instead, Delisle-Alaku said that animal rights activists have largely succeeded in pushing a narrative that suggests the polar bear population is in decline, and could even be extinct in the next century.

"We're explain to them that there's no decline over the recent past, our harvest is sustainable and the trade is positive," he said.

This Washington trip is one of a few efforts by Inuit groups in Canada in recent years to lobby against the up-listing of the polar bear and convince U.S. government representatives that Canada's management system is sound.

Last September, the five nations with polar bear populations — Canada, Denmark (Greenland), Russia, Norway and the U.S. — signed a non-binding agreement to share information collected on polar bear populations, dubbed the "first-ever action plan" to protect the species and their habitat.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674canadas\\_polar\\_bear\\_management\\_is\\_sound\\_inuit\\_groups\\_to\\_u.s.\\_government/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674canadas_polar_bear_management_is_sound_inuit_groups_to_u.s._government/)

## Land Claims & Treaty Rights

### OMB hearing into Burl's Creek underway



[K.C. Colby](#), Reporter/Videographer, CTV News Barrie

Published Thursday, February 4, 2016 6:56PM EST

The stage is being set for a big battle over Burl's Creek Events Ground in Oro-Medonte.

The owners of Burl's Creek filed an appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) and will challenge Oro-Medonte Township's temporary use by-law.

An appeal can be filed with the OMB within 120 days from the date when the application is deemed complete. The Township deemed the application complete on April 13, 2015.

This past summer, Burl's Creek hosted two major concert and camping festivals, WayHome and Boots and Hearts which attracted tens of thousands of people.

The Event's ground was fined by the township last year for violating by-laws on land use during The Automotive Flea Market. The event's ground pleaded guilty to seven violations and paid \$200, 000 dollars in fines.

More than 100 people brought their differing views to a preliminary hearing Thursday.

The OMB had granted five groups party status for the hearing including Burl's Creek, Friends of Burl's Creek, the Township of Oro-Medonte, Save Oro, and the Nottawasaga Conservation Authority.

On Thursday, a sixth party joined the fray, Montagnais Metis First Nation. They believe there is a Huron Wendatt settlement on the land and could include an ancient burial ground.

Burl's Creek and the Friends of Burl's Creek want the township to re-issue a temporary land use by-law, which would allow them to host events this summer.

Other groups such as Save Oro and the Montagnais Metis First Nation oppose that plan.

The OMB hearing will continue on Feb. 26

**Direct Link:** <http://barrie.ctvnews.ca/omb-hearing-into-burl-s-creek-underway-1.2765434>

## **Trudeau sending First Nations 'mixed signals' on veto rights on pipelines: chief**

National News | February 5, 2016 by Brandi Morin |



**Brandi Morin**

**APTN National News**

Alberta AFN Regional Chief Craig Mackinaw said Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's recent comments regarding a First Nations veto on pipelines is sending "mixed signals."

At an Edmonton press conference Wednesday Trudeau appeared to skirt a question to confirm a campaign promise he made that First Nations will have veto rights over energy projects on their territories.

Instead, Trudeau said a renewed relationship with First Nations centered on respecting treaty rights, creating partnerships and engaging in meaningful consultation.

"It kind of makes you wonder. I guess there will have to be more discussion with them (government) on the pipeline issue or there will be lawsuits coming down the road," said Mackinaw. "I don't know if the government wants to go down that road because a lot of the inherent chiefs from other regions are dead set against having these pipelines going through their territories. So I'm not sure they'll agree on a process."

Trudeau's remarks on Wednesday weren't as clear and confident as those he made during a televised town hall interview with APTN while campaigning to be Canada's next prime minister.

Trudeau said that "no" would "absolutely" mean "no" if the Liberals were elected.

"We cannot have a government that decides where the pipelines (are going to) go without having proper approval and support from the communities that are (going to) be affected," said Trudeau during that interview.

But not everyone thinks Trudeau has swayed from his commitments, including Cara Currie-Hall who led the Rock the Indigenous Vote movement and was recently appointed to the International Oversight committee on Treaty Enforcement and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) committee.

"I don't think he's broke any promises, yet," said Currie-Hall while referring to Article 32 of UNDRIP that specifically highlights resource extraction and Indigenous rights.

"I would say that the prime minister is really saying that he's implementing the UN declaration article number 32. A pipeline cannot be put in the ground unless he has the consent of the Indigenous people, which he does not have. Nobody has it."

She said Trudeau may have an opportunity to make progress by placing Indigenous people on the National Energy Board so that they can become engaged and informed.

"We're saying UNDRIP without conditions. (Governments) are required under the declaration to obtain our free, prior and informed consent. You cannot even talk about a pipeline until you bring it to the table," said Currie-Hall.

Trudeau visited Edmonton and Calgary holding meetings this week with Premier Rachel Notley and oil industry executives. The province and industry are upping pressure on the federal government to help fast track transport of oil sands bitumen to tidewater in hopes of kick starting a lagging economy hit hard by a drop in global oil prices.

But projects like the Transmountain Pipeline are facing strong opposition from Indigenous groups in British Columbia.

On Thursday, 130 First Nations led by the Yinka Dene Alliance signed on to the Save the Fraser declaration in British Columbia in direct opposition to the Northern Gateway Pipeline or similar tar sands projects to cross their territories.

The pipelines are a no go said Stewart Phillip, grand chief of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, who just a year and a half ago was arrested on Burnaby Mountain after protesting the Kinder Morgan Mountain project.

Phillip said the risks they represent to the environment are too great and that Trudeau should look at rebalancing his priorities.

"His own government ministers have said recently that you cannot engage the economy in one conventional economy to ensure that the environment and everything that that represents is properly protected," said Phillip.

"The two go hand-in-hand. They cannot be separated in the fashion that the previous (Stephen) Harper government pitted the economy against the environment. The Trudeau government cannot afford to make the same mistake. He needs to understand that there needs to be a very real, tangible balance in ensuring that environmental protections are securely in place along with the notions of growing the economy. You cannot separate the two."

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) said in a statement to APTN they don't believe talking about a pipeline "veto" is helpful.

"It's clear that First Nations have rights, treaties and title that are recognized in Canadian law as well as international standards like the right to free, prior and informed consent. These must be respected. All parties in development must be clear on their roles and responsibilities," the statement said.

The AFN is meeting in Vancouver next week for the First Nations Energy Forum to create dialogues with all levels of government, industry and First Nations.

**Direct Link:** <http://aptn.ca/news/2016/02/05/trudeau-sending-first-nations-mixed-signals-on-veto-rights-on-pipelines-chief/>

## **Dehcho First Nations appoint new chief negotiator for land claim process**

### **Yellowknife lawyer Garth Wallbridge replaces Georges Erasmus**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 05, 2016 7:10 AM CT Last Updated: Feb 05, 2016 7:10 AM CT

The Grand Chief of the Dehcho First Nations says now is the time to get land claim negotiations going again.

The Dehcho First Nations have just appointed a new chief negotiator, Yellowknife lawyer Garth Wallbridge, to negotiate a land claim with the territorial government.



Lawyer Garth Wallbridge has been appointed as the Dehcho First Nations' chief negotiator for a land claim with the territorial government. (CBC)

"He's aboriginal; he's Metis, and he's done bits and pieces of work with just about all the First Nations in Yellowknife and probably throughout the territories," said Herb Norwegian, Dehcho First Nations Grand Chief.



"When we put the questions to him, he had good background and could draw a pretty good picture on what we thought were important."

Wallbridge replaces Georges Erasmus, [who stepped down last September](#) after talks stalled. Erasmus spent 12 years negotiating the land claim.

The Dehcho First Nations are holding public workshops about the process Feb. 9-11 in Fort Simpson.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/dehcho-process-negotiator-appointed-1.3434876>

## Innu within reach of historic land settlement

CHRISTOPHER CURTIS, MONTREAL GAZETTE

Published on: February 8, 2016 | Last Updated: February 8, 2016 2:45 PM EST

After decades of a David versus Goliath struggle with the federal government, three small Innu nations are on the verge of securing a land claim settlement unlike any other in Canadian history.

The treaty would see the First Nations and Quebec governments co-manage a territory 16 times larger than the island of Montreal — setting aside certain areas for conservation and opening others up to mining partnerships with the Innu.

It would also guarantee royalties of at least three per cent for the group on all development within their vast traditional territory — centred in Quebec's Saguenay and Côte Nord regions. The Innu would retain exclusive hunting, fishing and logging rights on most of the 8,000-square-kilometre land mass.

And unlike previous federal land claim settlements, the Innu nations of Essipit, Mashteuiatsh and Nutashkuan wouldn't have to surrender title over their traditional territory. They wouldn't be subject to the Indian Act and would have a level of self-government seen in just a handful of reserves across Canada.

The proposed treaty gives communities control over their children's schooling, deputizes aboriginal park rangers to enforce Innu hunting laws and creates measures to safeguard the preservation of their language and culture.

"Even with the James Bay Agreement — which probably made the (Quebec) Cree the most powerful aboriginal organization in Canada — there was a surrender of title," said Daniel Salée, a political-science professor at Concordia University.

"Having title implies self-government, autonomy, full and total control over their land. It's huge."

But there is a catch.

Within 12 years of ratifying the agreement, most federal subsidies to the three reserves would expire. The Innu could counteract those losses by levying their own property and income taxes from band members. There's also an acknowledgement, by the Innu, that much of their traditional territory has permanently been lost to the growth of cities populated by non-Aboriginal settlers.

"As in any negotiation, there's give and take, but we have a chance at something huge here," said Raoul Kanapé, a member of the Innu negotiating team. "If we reach a deal, the Indian Act is over. We're taking care of ourselves now and if we make a mistake it'll be ours and no one else's. This is what independence looks like."

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***Land claim settlement would be historic***

The Innu nations of Essipit, Mashteuiatsh and Nutashkuan are poised to reach an agreement that would see the First Nations and Quebec governments co-manage a vast territory.



JEANINE LEE / MONTREAL GAZETTE

Kanapé and his colleagues expect they'll reach an agreement in principle with the federal and provincial government by March 31. Meanwhile, a representative from the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development said in an email to the Montreal Gazette the government is "optimistic" they'll reach a deal soon.

The potential for a treaty comes after rounds of negotiations that, at times, devolved into a war of attrition between the parties.

When the bargaining began over 30 years ago, nine band councils were at the table, representing Atikamekw and Innu communities across the province. But after years of stalled talks and broken deals, only three aboriginal communities are left at the table.

“The reason it took so long is we had one point we would not budge on: no matter what, we weren’t going to cede our land or our title,” said Marc Chaloup, who represents the Essipit Innu. “Every land claim settlement ends with the federal government forking over money and an aboriginal community surrendering title. That was unacceptable to us.”

Chaloup said surrendering title would make his group vulnerable to lawsuits from non-Aboriginal groups, contesting the transfer of federal lands back to the Innu. But resistance has come at a price; the three small band councils have racked up over \$40 million in debt for lawyers and land-use studies.

If an agreement is reached, the group would also have to turn around and sell it to the 7,500 band members it represents. After an information campaign, which could take up to two years, the three communities would hold a referendum on the matter.

“Even though we’ve been at the table for 30 years, the real work will be to win the referendum campaign,” said Chaloup. “If people turn the treaty project down, it’s back to the drawing board.”

Though the communities came within reach of a treaty in 2004, the provincial government turfed it amid protests from surrounding non-Aboriginal communities.

“We’ve had people protest in neighbouring communities — they took to the streets and yelled, ‘No treaties for the Innu,’ ” said Chaloup. “They carried signs that said, ‘No to the treaty.’ They lobbied the government. It was rough, but we’re past that.”

In the decade since those loud protests, the Innu’s bargaining position has only strengthened. In 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada awarded the Tsilhqot’in First Nation title over 1,700 square kilometres of land in British Columbia. Though the settlement came through a court case and not the land claim process, experts say it changed the way Canada negotiates with its aboriginal people.

There is an economic incentive that’s helping the Innu gain acceptance of the deal among their non-Aboriginal neighbours. In Essipit, more than 50 per cent of the people who work for the band council are non-Aboriginals from Les Escoumins and other neighbouring cities. Essipit’s band council has also invested in a local sawmill that’s a huge employer in the region.

The Innu have also helped pay to refurbish the ferry between Tadoussac and Trois-Pistoles and they’ve partnered with nearby communities on a whale watching business and other ventures.

In a region where unemployment consistently floats between 12 and 15 per cent, Chaloup says these partnerships have opened a lot of peoples’ eyes.

“We know there’s hard times here and our region is hurting, so we’re trying to be an economic engine,” he says. “We work with people, we want to be good, respectful neighbours. When that happens, everybody wins.”

The deal would give Essipit — a reserve of just 100 acres — the option to buy a 1,400-acre chunk of property from nearby Grande-Bergeronnes on a willing-buyer, willing-seller basis. Whatever new land the Innu acquire will be subject to their bylaws, enforced by an aboriginal court system.

Perhaps the most significant development for non-Aboriginals in this potential treaty is that it appears to offer a blueprint for natural resource extraction on Innu territory. Though the agreement gives Quebec the right to lease sections of the traditional territory for mining, the province can't undertake any project without the Innu's consent and participation.

In Nutashkuan, the Innu could have the option to partner with Quebec in developing and profiting from a 50-MW hydroelectric dam. This, too, would be subject to cooperation and consent from the First Nation.

Though the potential treaty will likely be a lucrative one for the nations — Kanapé's group estimates its cash value in the hundreds of millions — the idea of achieving sovereignty is what kept him going through years of white-knuckle bargaining.

"We're not doing this for us, it's for our children and our grandchildren," he says. "We want to give them something to be proud of."

**Direct Link:** <http://montrealgazette.com/news/innu-within-reach-of-historic-land-settlement>

## Energy East pipeline rejected by aboriginal group

**Wolastoq Grand Council has serious concerns for safety and protection of animals, plants, trees**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 08, 2016 1:37 PM AT Last Updated: Feb 09, 2016 12:11 PM AT



Ron Tremblay is the Grand Chief of the Wolastoq Grand Council. (CBC)

The proposed Energy East pipeline is being rejected by a group representing the Maliseet Nation.

The Wolastoq Grand Council held a news conference Monday to state its opposition to the proposed pipeline that would transport about 1.1 million barrels of Alberta crude oil a day through New Brunswick to Saint John.

"We unanimously oppose the Energy East pipeline project in order to protect our non-ceded homeland and waterways, our traditional land and cultural connection to our lands, waterways and air," said clan mother Alma Brooks.

"The Wolastoq Grand Council has serious concerns for the safety and protection of animals, fish, birds, insects, plants and tree life that sustains our Wolastoq Nation."

Grand Chief Ron Tremblay said the Grand Council does not have an position on the pipeline that is based on science or economics.

"Our values are connected spiritually to the land, water and air and we follow the original instructions from the Great Mystery to protect and preserve our homeland."

Clan mother Hart Perley of Tobique First Nation said the time has come to speak up.

"The premier is adamant about bringing the toxic sludge through our homeland and we're more adamant that it's not going to happen," said Perley.

"We are not allowing the pipeline to come through our homeland. It's not going to happen."

The grand council said the Crown has a legal duty to address and support its concerns.

"The Wolastoq Grand Council will expect from the appropriate Crown delegate and provincial representative, a written acceptance of our traditional philosophy, and our rejection of the Energy East tar sands pipeline as soon as possible."

The Grand Council says the homeland of the Wolastoqewiyik takes in all of New Brunswick as well as parts of Maine and Quebec.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/energy-east-wolastoq-pipeline-1.3438535>

## **Lower Mainland First Nation files Charter claim with top court**

[Emily Lazatin](#)

February 10, 2016 03:48 am



The Kwikwetlem First Nation has filed an Aboriginal title and rights and Charter claim with the Supreme Court of Canada.

The first nation says the claim is an effort to ensure its title and rights over key areas in its traditional territory.

In this case, the territory is based around the watershed of the Coquitlam river, which has seen significant development over many years.

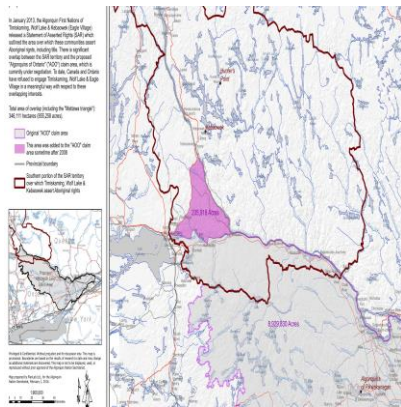
Areas in the case filed amount to less than 1% of Kwikwetlem's core territory, and includes the Colony Farm Forensic Psychiatric Institute.

The first nation says it hopes that the case will help to ensure it is meaningfully involved in decisions made about its lands, a process highlighted by the Supreme Court of Canada.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.newstalk770.com/syn/112/148115/kwikwetlem-first-nation>

## **'Non-Aboriginals' on list of Ontario Algonquins set to vote on treaty deal covering Ottawa: report**

National News | February 11, 2016 by Jorge Barrera |



**(A map of the overlap between competing Algonquin claims across the Ontario-Quebec border. Click to enlarge.)**

## **Jorge Barrera** **APTN National News**

Several individuals eligible to vote on a proposed Algonquin modern-day treaty covering Ottawa and a large swath of eastern Ontario are “non-Aboriginal” who claim to have an Algonquin ancestor “somewhere in the distant past,” according to a report provided to *APTN National News*.

The report examined the genealogy of 200 individuals on the Algonquins of Ontario (AOO) voters list which totals about 7,700 names. Of the analyzed group, 72 had only one Algonquin “root ancestor” stretching between four to six generations back, said the report.

“If these examples are typical of the AOO list, then it represents a triumph of genealogy over common sense...Call it the homeopathic approach to Aboriginal Title and Rights—a little drop will do you,” concluded the report, commissioned by Kebaouek First Nation, an Algonquin community in Quebec also known as Eagle Village which has a substantial territorial overlap with the AOO claim.

The AOO modern-day treaty, also known as a comprehensive claim, includes about 292,478 hectares of Kebaouek First Nation’s own claimed territory.

The report said none of the examined red-flagged individuals would “qualify for Indian status under even the most generous interpretation of the Indian Act” or meet the criteria as a beneficiary for any existing comprehensive agreements or modern-day treaties.

The report found that 66 of the 72 flagged individuals on AOO’s voter’s list had the same root ancestor—a woman from Timiskaming First Nation with mixed French and Algonquin ancestry who was born in 1853 and died in 1930. The remaining six individuals also shared the same root ancestor—a woman from Timiskaming First Nation who was born in 1822 and died in 1870.



“In review of the AOO voters list, I noticed that quite a few individuals claim descent from a single Algonquin “root ancestor.” This is problematic because it suggests that these particular individuals are essentially non-Aboriginal people with an Algonquin ancestor somewhere in the distant past,” said the report. “The same problem would arise if other names on the list were investigated.”

Kebaouek First Nation Chief Lance Haymond said the report confirms his fears.

“What is really happening here is a miscarriage of justice,” said Haymond. “These non-Aboriginal people are being allowed to vote in a process of extinguishment and it is just wrong.”

Haymond said he wants to see federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett or Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould intervene.

“The federal government fights us at every opportunity when we want to expand the definition of who would qualify as status Indian and they turn around and allow almost 7,000 non-Native people...to vote on such an important issue as a land claim which is going to extinguish the rights of 10,000 Algonquins,” said Haymond. “I find it fundamentally frustrating the federal government has allowed this to go this far.”

Indigenous Affairs, which is the lead on the file, did not respond to a request for comment as of this article’s posting.



Algonquins of Ontario claim map.

Toronto lawyer Bob Potts, the chief negotiator for the AOO claim, said the proposed modern treaty takes a more progressive view of Indigenous identity not tied to blood, but whether culture and community ties were maintained over the last 200 years.

“Why is that a problem if people have been practicing their culture over five generations?” said Potts. “The Indians that are part of this country are not all status...You don’t ignore non-status people....It is hard for some of the old hardline status-type people who feel it is an incursion of their rights.”

Potts said the AOO has a rigorous process for approving potential members for the claim and it weeded out people who could not trace a link to Algonquins from the area who began petitioning for their own communities beginning in the 1770s.

“They got run over by us over the last 200 years...They held on, they retained their culture, they retained some of their pride and we are trying to establish that again and people take exception to it,” said Potts. “There seems to be a lack of empathy with what happened to these people.”

Potts said Haymond need not worry about the AOO claim having any impact on the Kebaouek First Nation claim. He said the AOO claim has a clause that explicitly states the settlement of the modern-day treaty should not impact the rights of any other First Nation.

“The worst part about First Nations history is they end up fighting among themselves and the rest of the world moves along,” he said. “Having internecine warfare while the government sits on the sidelines and watches and waits for it to be eventually figured out...what does that do? There is less Crown land available for everybody.”

Hayden King, director for the Centre for Indigenous Governance and assistant professor of politics at Ryerson University, said the AOO claim’s standard for determining membership appeared to make it easier for the federal government to get its desired extinguishment for a large swath of territory.

“I think this is problematic and appears to be part of a trend in non-Indigenous people with a sliver of Indigenous heritage determining long-term and political outcomes for actual communities,” said King. “This actually reminds me of the old Indian Act provisions designed to facilitate land surrenders.”

The AOO claim covers about 3.6 million hectares stretching from Algonquin Park east to Hawkesbury, Ont., including Ottawa, and down into territory near Kingston, Ont. If finalized, the deal would see \$300 million in capital funding and 47,550 hectares of Ontario Crown land transferred to the AOO.

There are a total of 10 communities that make up part of the AOO claim, but only one, Pikwakanagan First Nation, is a recognized band under the Indian Act.

Pikwakanagan Chief Kirby Whiteduck did not return a request for comment.

Pikwakanagan band members and those who claim to have root ancestors from the community make up 703, or 9 per cent, of the 7,714 total number of individuals on the AOO list eligible to vote on ratifying the claim.

Voting for a proposed agreement in principle on the modern-day treaty between the AOO, Ontario and the federal government begins Feb. 29 and runs until March 7.

**Direct Link:** <http://aptn.ca/news/2016/02/11/non-aboriginals-on-list-of-ontario-algonquins-set-to-vote-on-treaty-deal-covering-ottawa-report/>

# Jim Carr: Indigenous Peoples Will Be Consulted On Resource Projects

CP | By The Canadian Press

Posted: 02/10/2016 2:18 pm EST Updated: 02/10/2016 2:59 pm EST

**THE CANADIAN PRESS** 🇨🇦

VANCOUVER — Canada's natural resources minister says the Liberal government wants to collaborate with indigenous communities to develop natural resources based on a low-carbon, sustainable energy economy.

Jim Carr told an energy forum organized by the Assembly of First Nations today that Aboriginal Peoples will be consulted on resource projects and decisions will be based on science.



*Natural Resources Minister Jim Carr speaks in the House of Commons last week. (Photo: Adrian Wyld/CP)*

He highlighted the government's introduction of new environmental assessment rules for major resource projects including Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain pipeline expansion and Enbridge's Northern Gateway project.

The forum brings together First Nations from across Canada to set priorities for working with the energy industry.

Carr's remarks come after two bands launched a \$3-billion class action lawsuit against the federal government alleging mismanagement by the agency responsible for protecting their oil and gas rights.

**Direct Link:** [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/02/10/carr-promises-first-nations-collaboration-on-energy-development\\_n\\_9202862.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/02/10/carr-promises-first-nations-collaboration-on-energy-development_n_9202862.html)

## Kwikwetlem First Nation files Supreme Court challenge for traditional lands

Parcel includes Riverview Hospital and Colony Farm Psychiatric Institute lands

BY KIM PEMBERTON, VANCOUVER SUN FEBRUARY 11, 2016 1:17 PM



'Although governments have taken some steps to involve us in making decisions about how our lands will be used, we do not feel our title and rights interests are being taken seriously,' said Kwikwetlem First Nation Chief Ron Giesbrecht in a statement.

A small B.C. First Nation says it's been squeezed out of its traditional territory around the Coquitlam River watershed and forced to file an aboriginal title and rights charter claim with the Supreme Court of Canada because the province won't negotiate with it.

The Kwikwetlem First Nation, which has only 85 members, was considered too small to enter into the modern treaty process and denied the right to sit at their own negotiating table to resolve their land claim, said lawyer Karey Brooks.

"This is a small nation of limited means and it takes a tremendous amount of money and resources to file a Supreme Court claim. To take a claim from pleadings to trial costs millions of dollars. That's why they are used as a last resort for First Nations."

The Kwikwetlem First Nation said it didn't have any other option but the court challenge since the province has excluded it from the treaty process, Brooks said.

“Their hope, of course, is the Crown will negotiate a fair resolution with them but if that doesn’t happen, they are prepared to complete the court challenge.”

The claimed title area in the case filed Wednesday in Supreme Court is less than 1 per cent of Kwikwetlem’s core territory but is considered key land that includes the Riverview Hospital lands and Colony Farm Forensic Psychiatric Institute lands.

“There has been increasing development of these lands and we are now left at a point with very little space to exercise our aboriginal title to hunt, fish, harvest and perform or traditional ceremonies,” said Kwikwetlem councillor Fred Hulbert.

He said when Riverview was closed in 2012 and the provincial government began plans to redevelop the land, the Kwikwetlem First Nation expected to be meaningfully involved in those decisions, but that didn’t happen.

Brooks said the First Nation was treated like it was simply another stakeholder at the table, instead of like a landowner with a major interest in what happened on the lands.

“They have a legal interest in the land. They do feel historically they have been excluded from decisions in how these really important lands are used,” she said.

“The lands are most critical to them. They have tremendous value to the nation.”

“Our community has worked hard to be consulted and meaningfully involved in decisions about the planning and management of our land for years,” said Kwikwetlem Chief Ron Giesbrecht in a press release. “Although governments have taken some steps to involve us in making decisions about how our lands will be used, we do not feel our title and rights interests are being taken seriously. Given there are limited processes for resolving Aboriginal land claims for a small Nation like ours, this claim is the next logical step.”

B.C. Treaty Commission spokeswoman Odette Wilson said the Kwikwetlem submitted a statement of intent in the 1990s, which is the first stage of the treaty process, “but we are unclear why it didn’t move forward.”

Giesbrecht, who was not available for comment Wednesday, came under public criticism in 2014 after it was revealed he was paid nearly \$1 million in compensation the previous year. His salary as chief in 2013 was \$4,800, with an additional \$80,000 for being the economic development officer. But, he also received a bonus of \$800,000 under a contract that stipulated he was entitled to 10 per cent of all economic activity he brought to the community.

A former chief of the band, Marvin Joe, called on Giesbrecht to resign and return the money but Giesbrecht said he wouldn't resign since he had the support of his band members.

Asked how the band will finance the court challenge, Brooks said she couldn't comment and added Giesbrecht's wage payment "doesn't have any bearing on this matter."

Read

more:<http://www.vancouversun.com/news/kwikwetlem+first+nation+files+supreme+court+challenge+traditional+lands/11711211/story.html#ixzz3zuBQsONw>

## Special Topic: Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women

### Missing, murdered indigenous women's families grieve at special ceremony

**Hundreds of people who lost loved ones gather near B.C.'s Highway of Tears**

By Betsy Trumpener, [CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 07, 2016 7:00 AM PT Last Updated: Feb 07, 2016 7:00 AM PT



Matilda Wilson, middle, joined other grieving families during a mourning ceremony for missing and murdered loved ones in Prince George. (Terry Teegee/Facebook)

With hundreds of indigenous girls and women murdered or missing across Canada, the families of victims in B.C. held a mourning ceremony in Prince George.

The B.C government invited family members of victims to a three-day, private gathering there this week, which was held not far from the [Highway of Tears](#) where 18 girls or women have been murdered or gone missing.

As part of a mourning ceremony at the gathering, each family who'd lost a loved one sent one person to sit on the stage.



Family members of B.C.'s missing and murdered women fill the stage during a mourning ceremony in Prince George. (Terry Teegee, Facebook)

"The stage was filled to over capacity," said Carrier Sekani Tribal Council Chief Terry Teegee, who's lost two family members. "Too many of our sisters are gone."

## Families broken by grief

Lillian Howard travelled from Vancouver Island to attend the gathering. She lost her two young aunts, Helena and Christine Howard, to violence more than 30 years ago.

"People don't deal with it," said Howard. "They grieve for a little while and then they put it on hold. We were a large, large family, and that just broke the family apart. I'm here to go through the healing process with other families."





A display of Natasha Montgomery's life. The young Quesnel mother disappeared and her body has never been found, although serial killer Cody Legebokoff was convicted of her murder. (Terry Teegee Facebook )

"We should not be targets," said Howard. "We're mothers and daughters and sisters ... this [national inquiry](#) that's coming up, we're ready for it."

Teegee said it's emotional and powerful for the families of B.C.'s murdered and missing Aboriginal women and girls to share their grief and find strength in each other.

"It is an historic day to see change for indigenous women in this province. I am a witness."



A display at the family gathering for young women who were murdered or went missing along northern B.C.'s Highway of Tears. (Terry Teegee/Facebook)

With files from Terry Teegee, Kym Gouchie, Andrew Kurjata

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/hundreds-of-victims-bc-family-members-gather-to-mourn-1.3436386>

# Red dress exhibit honours missing and murdered aboriginal women

**'The trajectory of this project is towards hope and reconciliation,' says creator Lori Calkins**

By Edmonton AM, [CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 08, 2016 10:38 AM MT Last Updated: Feb 08, 2016 2:06 PM MT



The red dresses are meant to represent Canada's missing and murdered aboriginal women, says Lori Calkins, the artist behind the new outdoor art installation on the corner of 92nd Street and 118th Avenue.

In a stand of barren trees in Edmonton's Alberta Avenue neighbourhood, 40 red dresses have been suspended from shorn branches and left to sway silently in the street.

The dresses — which encircle a bare, uncovered teepee — are meant to represent Canada's missing and murdered aboriginal women, says Lori Calkins, the artist behind the new outdoor art installation on the corner of 92nd Street and 118th Avenue.

"Each of the dresses represents about 30 missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls, and their families," said Calkins during a Monday morning interview on *Edmonton AM*.

Calkins, a Métis woman and Anglican priest, says the dresses are meant to act as a striking reminder of the ongoing epidemic, and an act of reconciliation.

"We hope that people will see that there are hundreds of indigenous women and girls that have gone missing or have been murdered in this country," Calkins said. "Indigenous women are not being valued and that needs to change."

The exhibit has been titled Ni Wapataenan, which means "we see."

"We want people to recognize that indigenous women are so much more than the negative statistics that we see in the news," said Calkins, who drew inspiration from Jaime Black's [REDress Project](#).

"Art, I think can engage people, their hearts and their imaginations, in ways that information on its own just can't."

Calkins describes the project as a community collaboration. More than 20 local writers shared their messages of reconciliation, which have been hung in the trees alongside a series of traditional teachings from indigenous community elders.

[The Bleeding Art Space](#) helped execute the display, and the gallery will be hosting a series of exhibits, talks and workshops in conjunction with the tribute, including kâ-katawasisicik iskwêwak, an indoor exhibit by Lana Whiskeyjack from Saddle Lake Cree Nation.

"The trajectory of this project is towards hope and reconciliation," Calkins said. "We hope people will see the beauty, dignity and strength of indigenous women."

The opening ceremony for Ni Wapataenan was held Sunday, and the interactive installation will remain in place until March 5.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/red-dress-exhibit-honours-missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-women-1.3438402>

## Carolyn Bennett Hears Anger, Cynicism From Families Of Murdered Indigenous Women

CP | By Steve Lambert, The Canadian Press

Posted: 02/08/2016 2:47 pm EST Updated: 02/08/2016 4:59 pm EST

**THE CANADIAN PRESS** 

WINNIPEG — Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett met with the families of missing and murdered aboriginal women in Winnipeg on Monday and said she noticed a different tone from similar meetings in other cities.

"Today we heard many things a little bit different than other places," Bennett said halfway through the day-long meeting.

"Here in Winnipeg, there seems to be tremendous anger and cynicism. People are concerned about the police. They're concerned about the government. And ... they were quite skeptical as to whether an inquiry will help at all."



*Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett, right, speaks to reporters in Quebec City as Heritage Minister Melanie Joly looks on. (Photo: Jacques Boissinot/CP)*

Bennett is on a cross-country tour to meet with victims' families and other interested parties so parameters can be set for an inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women that is expected to begin by summer.

Bennett referred to the Manitoba capital as ground zero in the growing awareness Canadians have for the plight of aboriginal women. She cited the 2014 death of Tina Fontaine, 15, whose body was put in a bag and dumped into the Red River, and a near-fatal attack on a 16-year-old girl who was brutally beaten while she walked along the Assiniboine River.

Bennett met with about 170 people in a private gathering closed to the media. Willie Starr — whose sister Jennifer Catcheway disappeared from Portage la Prairie, Man., in 2008 — said there was a lot of tension in the room.

"There's a lot of pain and hurt that people have been carrying for decades in some cases," Starr said.

He and his family tried to report the 18-year-old Catcheway as missing immediately, but they were brushed off by RCMP, he said.

"They told us that she was out on a drunk, come back in a week ... and that's a crucial time to investigate on a case."

Starr said he would like the inquiry to address how police handle complaints about missing indigenous women and how much support can be offered to families looking for a missing relative. He'd also like a greater understanding of poverty, racism and other issues.

Bennett said there were other concerns raised, too, such as stereotypes of indigenous persons in the media.

She said it will be a challenge to determine the scope and mandate of the inquiry, since it must focus on key issues, but also be broad enough to address concerns of victims' families.

"We will need to work through what is that right balance (between) way too broad and way too narrow."

**Direct Link:** [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/02/08/indigenous-affairs-minister-hears-anger-cynicism-from-families-of-murdered-women\\_n\\_9189552.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/02/08/indigenous-affairs-minister-hears-anger-cynicism-from-families-of-murdered-women_n_9189552.html)

## Art project dedicated to missing and murdered aboriginal women coming to Wheat City

LANNY STEWART / WESTMAN JOURNAL  
FEBRUARY 9, 2016 01:50 PM



A look at some of the moccasin tops (vamps) that are part of the "Walking With Our Sisters" art project.

A commemorative art project dedicated to honouring the lives of missing and murdered indigenous women in Canada and the U.S. is making its way to the Wheat City later this month.

The crowd-sourced project, which is entitled "Walking With Our Sisters" involves the creation of moccasin tops (vamps) and currently features more than 1,800 pairs of vamps created and donated by the public.

Local artist Cathy Mattes, one of the lead organizers in bringing the project to Brandon, says she was contacted via Facebook several years ago by a fellow colleague looking to raise awareness of the issue. Several people got on board with the project and eventually Walking With Our Sisters began touring Canada. The project is coming to Brandon for the first time late February.

“Brandon is a perfect place for this project to come,” Mattes told the Journal. “I feel firmly that art can play an important role in educating the public about different sorts of issues that arise all the time. It can be used as a healing and development tool as well. So I think for me, that’s really important regarding the project.”

The vamps are intentionally not sewn into moccasins to represent the 1,180-plus women or girls who have been murdered or gone missing since 1980.

“I think that’s such an injustice that needs to be addressed in multiple ways so this art project is one way,” Mattes added. “I think there’s a very strong history of colonization and with colonization comes gender imbalances and racism and it can lead to violence against indigenous women and it has and continues to do so.”

The art project originally got started by Metis artist Christi Belcourt, a person Mattes met years ago while organizing an art exhibition about Louis Riel, the founder of the province of Manitoba and a political leader of the Metis people in the Canadian prairies for years.

“Several years ago, Christi was working as a journalist for a newspaper and that’s the first time I spoke with her,” Mattes said looking back. “She was interviewing me and over time, we became friends and peers.”

The project will be housed in Brandon University’s “Down Under” space for the duration of its stay and it’s expected that there will be extended programming taking place before and during the exhibition, including workshops and elder teachings.

Mattes is hoping the art installation, which takes place Feb. 22 - March 6, can be an initiator of conversation and can leave a lasting mark on the city.

“What we’re really hoping is that people of all ages come to honour women and their families,” she added. “What we’ve seen so far is a lot of support and interest in the region and I firmly believe that there’s going to be some good actions coming out of the project.”

For more information on the project, contact Mattes at [wwosbrandon@gmail.com](mailto:wwosbrandon@gmail.com). You can also join the Walking With Our Sisters group on Facebook.

- See more at: <http://www.westmanjournal.com/news/local-news/art-project-dedicated-to-missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-women-coming-to-wheat-city-1.2168294#sthash.YBP5dZqi.dpuf>

## **Special Topic: Residential Schools, TRC, & ‘60s Scoop**



# First steps in reconciliation

By [Zoe Kessler](#), Shoreline-Beacon

Friday, February 5, 2016 3:19:58 EST PM



Commissioner Chief Wilton Littlechild (left), Justice Murray Sinclair and Commissioner Marie Wilson unveil the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report in Ottawa, Canada, December 15, 2015.

**SAUGEEN SHORES** - It's early days since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) unveiling, and the Saugeen Shores community is at various stages in its response to the Report's recommendations. Justice Murray Sinclair, TRC Chairman, described the TRC Report as a "mountain," adding that the Report laid a path, but "We call upon you to do the climbing." While area churches and schools have made some steps up that mountain, it appears the Saugeen Shores municipality has not yet begun to pack for the journey.

Last June, the Liberal government called for the implementation of all 94 TRC calls to action, which encompass nearly every aspect of society. Municipal governments, boards of education at every grade level, churches, museums, and medical and nursing schools are all called upon to educate their constituents about Aboriginal history, teachings and practices.

"I understood that the Prime Minister said that they were going to implement, I think he said, all of them?" said Saugeen Shores Mayor Mike Smith, adding, "...I know the framework, but I don't know the specifics of it."

In a Feb. 3 interview, Smith said Saugeen Shores has had "great relations" with Saugeen First Nation over the years, "and have a pretty good understanding of those things, those cultures, and those people..."

"Call to Action" Number 57 called for professional development and training for public servants, including those in municipal governments, "to provide education on the history of Aboriginal peoples, etc." When asked about this recommendation and the municipality's plans, Smith said, "The report was to the Federal government and I suspect that they'll have some pretty specific objectives that they want to meet and I would wait for those. I mean, I don't think there's any issue about dealing with the issues, it's just, what does the Minister expect?"

Further along the path, "The United Church has been walking the road toward reconciliation for years, and has been an active partner in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process," The Rev. Keith Reynolds, of Southampton United Church said in a telephone interview Feb. 2.

Reynolds said a small group of church and community members met with Chief Vernon Roote and others from Saugeen First Nation Jan. 31 at St. Andrew's Presbyterian for a meal and discussion. TRC issues were



raised, but the gathering was also “to build relationships” Reynolds said, adding, “and how you build relationships is you spend time together.”

To mark the 105th anniversary of Canadian Confederation in 2017, the TRC called for reconciliation-themed projects to be developed by the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples.

In a Feb. 5 email, Cathy McGirr, Director of Museum & Cultural Services at the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, said the CMA has had meetings with the National Friendship Centres Association and a meeting with Assembly of First Nations is pending.

“The Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre continues to collaborate with both Saugeen First Nation and Chippewas of Nawash on a number of opportunities,” McGirr said, including the River Mouth and Ki-n De’e exhibits, upcoming summer Cultural Demonstrations, and redevelopment work in the permanent gallery spaces.

The Bluewater District School Board (BDSB) has also started the climb. Lori Wilder, Superintendent of Education, said the Board has planned a day-long training session about treaties and residential schools in April. One teacher from every BDSB school will attend.

“We’re trying to be a little proactive ourselves,” Wilder said, in advance of any curriculum changes coming from the Ministry of Education.

“This whole thing is making everybody think, and that’s why it’s our role, not even just in schools, but in society, to help educate people, because there are people my age who have no idea even of the residential schools. It’s very sad that some people just don’t even know,” Wilder said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.shorelinebeacon.com/2016/02/05/first-steps-in-reconciliation>

## Douglas Todd: Canadian aboriginals joining Christian clergy despite residential-school legacy

‘I think forgiveness is a way of healing and getting on with our lives,’ says Catholic deacon and Squamish elder Rennie Nahanee

BY DOUGLAS TODD, VANCOUVER SUN FEBRUARY 5, 2016

Rennie Nahanee believes aboriginals abused at Canada’s, Christianity church-run residential schools “have a right to be angry.”

But the Squamish Nation elder, recently ordained a deacon to the Roman Catholic Church, also admires aboriginals who have overcome rage through forgiveness and reconciliation.

The soft-spoken deacon at St. Paul’s Indian Catholic Church in North Vancouver, who is also a church musician and member of a rock band, knows Canada’s 2011 National Household Survey reports that 36 per cent of aboriginals express affiliation with Roman Catholicism.

Although attendance averages about 100 people at a typical Sunday service at St. Paul’s Church on the Squamish reserve on the North Shore waterfront, Nahanee says every time there is a funeral the church, built in 1884, is packed.

That's often the relationship between aboriginals and Christianity. When a 17-year-old youth recently gunned down four people in La Loche, Saskatchewan, the region's aboriginals squeezed into a service led by Dene-speaking Catholic Archbishop Murray Chatlain (a friend of Nahanees's).

Despite a misconception among urban Canadians that aboriginals hate Roman Catholic and Protestant denominations, Christianity is integral to the spiritual life of two of three of the country's 1.4 million indigenous people, even while church attendance can be irregular.

The Anglican Church is among the major Canadian Christian denominations that have frequently apologized for early colonial attitudes, including for running some of the country's more than 100 federally funded aboriginal residential schools.

Nevertheless, the Anglican Church continues to have tens of thousands of active aboriginal members, with more than 225 predominantly indigenous congregations, often in rural or northern regions.

More than 130 indigenous Anglican priests and deacons serve those congregations. And since 1989, Anglicans have elected nine aboriginal bishops.

The biggest group of Canadian aboriginals, 506,000, affiliate with Roman Catholicism. The National Household Survey found another 134,000 associate with the Anglican Church, 59,000 with the United Church and 36,000 are Pentecostal.

Almost one in five aboriginals say they have "no religion." And 63,000 say they follow traditional aboriginal spirituality.

Dozens of aboriginal clergy in the Anglican, United Church, Lutheran and Presbyterian churches have trained through the Native Ministries Consortium at Vancouver School of Theology on the UBC campus. Every summer, 40 to 60 aboriginal theology students take programs at The Native Ministries Consortium, says director Ray Aldred, who is Cree.

The students are often from the West Coast — Salish, Haida, Tsimshian, etc. Other indigenous students hail from Ontario, the Arctic and the Prairies. That's not to mention Lakota, Navajo or Nez Perce from the U.S.

Contrary to most media reports about Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Aldred believes "aboriginal anger about white Christianity" and the legacy of residential schools abated more than a decade ago.

"I think in the 1950s the churches began realizing they had made a mistake with residential schools. But it took another 50 years to get out of them," said Aldred, 56.

The churches closed almost all residential schools by the 1970s, but the federal government's billion-dollar compensation and healing program is continuing.

"Now we can do Christian faith on our own terms," said Aldred, who was baptized in the United Church but is now a minister in the Alliance Church. "That's the cool thing about Canada. We seem to find ways to get along."

Both Aldred and Nahanee feel they have integrated Christianity into their aboriginal traditions.

"I believe Christianity is everyone's religion. It's not just white man's religion," said Nahanee, 63, who also chairs the Canadian Catholic Aboriginal Council.

Nahanee often holds a talking stick or eagle feather when he's in the pulpit at St. Paul's Church, which is decorated with aboriginal designs and where he co-ministers with his Filipina wife, Emma, 53.

The Catholic Church allows deacons, unlike its priests, to be married. However, Nahanee and Emma joked about how the church would not permit him to remarry if she died.

Even though Nahanee would like to see Pope Francis repeat earlier Vatican apologies for Canada's residential-school system, including one that operated a few hundred metres from St. Paul's Church, he regrets how some good things that happened in the schools are being ignored.

"People are now afraid to say positive things about the schools," said Nahanee. He noted, for instance, that in the late 1800s the Catholic priest for St. Paul's Church and its related residential school stopped an attempt by the legendary Vancouver saloon owner, "Gassy Jack" Deighton, to seize Squamish Nation land.

Nahanee is convinced Christianity, at its best, adds to aboriginal culture. He knows it might not be for everyone, but he urges aboriginals and others who are angry about the past to find ways to transcend it.

"I think forgiveness is a way of healing and getting on with our lives. We've had so many problems because of anger and alcoholism. It has to end."

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.vancouversun.com/life/douglas+todd+canadian+aboriginals+joining+christian+clergy+despite+residential+school+legacy/11700642/story.html>

## Some former residential students denied compensation

**"The worst ones were when serious abuse happened literally feet from the property line"**

SARAH ROGERS, February 09, 2016 - 10:30 am



Inuit children from the western Arctic gather outside a residential school in this undated file photo. A dozen or so former students from the North have had their compensation claims denied for a variety of technicalities under the federal settlement agreement. (FLEMMING/NWT ARCHIVES: N-1979-050-0101)

The federal government has promised to look into an estimated 1,000 compensation claims made by residential school survivors that were rejected due to an administrative glitch.

The problem hinges on an "administrative split," created in the 1950s and 1960s, when the federal government began operating certain residential schools, while leaving others to be operated by religious organizations.

Under the Independent Assessment Process, one element of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, former students who suffered sexual or serious physical abuse can apply for compensation.

The administrative technicality, which limits compensation to those abused on federal property, has now left many former students empty-handed.

That specific glitch doesn't extend as far as Nunavut, or into other northern territories where Inuit attended residential schools, which remained largely under the control of the federal government.

Still, anywhere between 10 and 20 Inuit applicants in Nunavut have been denied compensation under IAP for other technicalities, said Steven Cooper, an Edmonton-based lawyer who has represented former residential school students for nearly two decades.

"The worst ones were when serious abuse happened literally feet from the property line," Cooper said. "The other one where abuse took place... and we're not entirely sure, but it involved nothing other than students in residences."

In one case he's familiar with, the alleged abuse happened in an igloo just outside the school's premises.

"I hate the fact that those who did not get compensation because they were abused in the wrong place," Cooper said. "It really bothers me."

Some of those cases will be reviewed, he added.

Generally speaking, a few years into the process, the uptake for IAP claims from Inuit former students has been slower than that of their First Nations and Métis counterparts, he said.

As the IAP process winds down, Inuit have made up a tiny fraction of the IAP claims among former students; in 2015, Inuit made up 0.02 per cent of claims, although Inuit represent 4.2 per cent of all Indigenous Canadians.

However, it's hard to say for sure, because it's unclear how many eligible Inuit residential school survivors there were in the first place.

When the residential school settlement was launched, it was estimated that at least 3,000 Nunavummiut had attended residential schools.

Present day Nunavut was home to 13 residential schools, while four operated in Nunavik and three in the Northwest Territories.

Cooper said the residential school settlement process has been a good system, for the most part.

"When the first hearings were held in 2007, there was a general willingness on the part of the government to accept reasonable claims and not get too technical," he said. "As the parties found their feet, it seemed that the government lawyers and their resolution managers started to dig their heels in."

"So what started to happen was that certain types of cases resulted in no compensation, for a variety of reasons."

Since its creation in 2007, the IAP has paid out about \$3 billion to more than 32,000 former students.

The IAP is a claimant-centred process, in which former students must show harm occurred at a listed school or hostel they attended.

The IAP also operates separately from the Common Experience Payment, another compensation program which was available to anyone who attended residential school.

All Nunavut-based IAP hearings should be done in the next couple of months, Cooper said, although files may remain open for another six to eight months due to delays and appeals.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674some\\_former\\_residential\\_students\\_denied\\_compensation/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674some_former_residential_students_denied_compensation/)

# Indigenous Sixties Scoop adoptees want meeting with Canada's new government

**Group says invite sent in December to discuss Sixties Scoop, no response from PM or ministers**

By Tim Fontaine, [CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 11, 2016 1:08 PM ET Last Updated: Feb 11, 2016 3:32 PM ET



Colleen Cardinal was born in Edmonton but was adopted by a non-indigenous family in Ontario.  
(Waubgeshig Rice, CBC News)

A group of indigenous people adopted during the Sixties Scoop says no members of Canada's Liberal government have responded to its request to meet with the prime minister and cabinet.

During the Sixties Scoop, between the 1960s and '80s, an estimated 20,000 indigenous children were taken from their parents by child welfare services and placed with mostly white families. Torn from their communities, many lost touch with their culture and language.

On Dec. 16., Indigenous Adoptees-Ottawa sent a letter inviting Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for a discussion about healing from damage caused by the Sixties Scoop.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Justice Jody Wilson-Raybould, as well as Canadian Human Rights Commission head Marie-Claude Landry and National Chief Perry Bellegarde were also addressed in the letter.

Though it was sent out again in January, there has been no response from any of the recipients,

Neither Indigenous Affairs nor the Prime Minister's Office has responded to CBC's inquiries about the letter and the Sixties Scoop.

"I don't think they're interested in this conversation," said Colleen Cardinal, co-founder of the Indigenous Adoptees group.

"I think they're really caught up in doing the [inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women](#).

"There should be some form of acknowledgment that they've actually received a letter and that they're looking into it," says Duane Morrisseau-Beck, group co-founder and one of the letter's authors.

"To date, we haven't had any acknowledgment from anywhere."

## Taken at birth

Children taken during the Sixties Scoop were mostly sent to live in homes across Canada and the United States, but some ended up as far away as Europe, New Zealand and Australia.

In 1972, Colleen Cardinal was taken from her biological family at birth in Edmonton and adopted into a non-indigenous family in Ontario.

"I didn't even know I was native until I was a teenager," Cardinal said. "The home I grew up in was extremely violent."

When she was 16, Cardinal ran away to Alberta and discovered her birth mother, a residential school survivor who was then living on "skid row."



In 1972, Colleen Cardinal was taken from her biological family at birth in Edmonton and adopted into a non-indigenous family in Ontario. "I didn't even know I was native until I was a teenager," Cardinal says. Picture taken in 1989. (Colleen Cardinal)

Cardinal eventually returned to Ontario and began rediscovering her First Nation roots — and connecting with other adoptees.

"I thought I was the only one who was adopted."

Still, because of the abuse she suffered Cardinal now lives with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).



Along with Duane Morrisseau-Beck and other members of the Indigenous Adoptees group, she organizes gatherings of Sixties Scoop survivors in Ottawa and regularly communicates with other groups across the country.

## Strategy needed

In 2015, Manitoba apologized for its role in the Sixties Scoop and Saskatchewan is expected to follow suit. There have also been class-action suits launched in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and B.C. that would see adoptees receive compensation, similar to what was offered to residential school survivors.

Indigenous Adoptees-Ottawa says a meeting with the prime minister and cabinet should be the first of many with indigenous adoptees across the country.

The group would like to see the creation of national roundtables similar to ones held for missing and murdered indigenous women, where governments, agencies and adoptees can develop some sort of strategy.

Morrisseau-Beck says survivors he has spoken to in the Ottawa area have even been asking for a national inquiry into the Sixties Scoop such as the one being crafted by the government for missing and murdered indigenous women.

"This new government promised that it would work on reconciliation and this is it," says Cardinal. "We're asking for it."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/indigenous-adoptees-seek-action-1.3442299>

## Special Topic: International Indigenous Populations

Costa Mesa marijuana raid hit Native American church, not a dispensary, lawyer says



The door is chained after Costa Mesa police raided a Harbor Boulevard storefront that they believed was a marijuana dispensary but a lawyer says is a new location of Oklevueha Native American Church. (Scott Smeltzer / Daily Pilot)

### **Jeremiah Dobruck Contact Reporter**

Police officers who thought they were shutting down a marijuana dispensary last week in Costa Mesa were in fact raiding a Native American church that uses cannabis and other controlled substances in its spiritual ceremonies, according to a lawyer representing the organization's founders.

Attorney Matthew Pappas said the Oklevueha Native American Church was in the process of opening a branch in Costa Mesa when police stormed the Harbor Boulevard location.

Costa Mesa has banned marijuana sellers in the city, but Pappas contends that Oklevueha's more than 200 chapters across the country are shielded by federal religious freedom laws.

"These are churches, not marijuana dispensaries," said Pappas, who compared parishioners' use of cannabis, peyote and natural herbs to sacramental wine.

But Costa Mesa police officials said this week that they saw nothing during their raid to support the idea that the strip-mall storefront they searched was a church.

"There was no indication that it was acting as anything other than a marijuana dispensary," Costa Mesa police Sgt. Pat Wessel said.

Local authorities recently have been on the lookout for dispensaries, based on residents' complaints that some are still operating in Costa Mesa despite a 2005 city ban.

After surveillance, city officials said, police determined that a dispensary named Releaf Wellness was operating out of a unit in the 2000 block of Harbor Boulevard.

Around 3:30 p.m. Jan. 27, police and code enforcement officers served a search warrant, Wessel said.

Inside, officers said they found two large safes containing various marijuana products and \$6,000 cash, according to city spokesman Tony Doderio.

Police believe the location had been a dispensary long enough to become well-established. Even while officers were inside, several customers came to the door, Doderio said.

During the raid, police said, five people were arrested on suspicion of distributing marijuana. Pappas said none of them was affiliated with the church.

According to Doderio, police found paperwork showing the arrestees were employees at the dispensary.

It's unclear whether the Orange County district attorney's office will file charges against those arrested. Prosecutors sent the case of at least one of the suspects back to police for further investigation.

It's not clear when the location came under the auspices of Oklevueha. Police said they learned of the church's existence after the raid.

Pappas chalked up the raid to a misunderstanding. The church often establishes branches where dispensaries or other marijuana-related businesses had been located to benefit from understanding landlords, Pappas said. That transition is underway at the Harbor Boulevard site, he said, but he was unable to provide an exact date for the shift.

Pappas said Oklevueha has been misconstrued and persecuted across the country since its 1997 founding in Utah.

The church doesn't require members to have Native American heritage, he said, and doesn't allow controlled substances to be distributed outside the congregation.

In November, Pappas filed a lawsuit on behalf of the church in U.S. District Court in Northern California alleging that sheriff's deputies in Sonoma County stormed a church location and destroyed sacramental cannabis plants, violating members' religious rights.

Despite the raid in Costa Mesa, Pappas said the church plans to remain in the city.

"We're not taking offense at it," Pappas said. "It's a misunderstanding. So let's move forward and work positively. There will be a branch in Costa Mesa."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.latimes.com/socal/daily-pilot/news/tn-dpt-me-0205-marijuana-church-20160204-story.html>

## **Lawmakers Push White House To Repair Neglected Native American Schools**

No student should have to learn in a moldy, rat-infested classroom.

02/05/2016 11:27 am ET

- [Rebecca Klein](#) Education Editor, The Huffington Post

It can be difficult for students in [Minnesota's Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School](#) to learn when their classrooms are covered in mold, reek of the smell of sewage and sometimes suffer from rodent infestations. But for years, Congress has failed to allocate the funds necessary to fix these problems.

A group of lawmakers pressed the White House in a letter Wednesday to allocate money to repair dilapidated Bureau of Indian Education schools -- like Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig -- in the upcoming 2017 budget proposal. The letter is signed by a bipartisan group of senators and representatives from Minnesota, and addressed to Director of the Office of Management and Budget Shaun Donovan.

The Bureau of Indian Education is the federal agency tasked with operating over 180 schools for Native American children. Unfortunately, many of these schools fail to adequately educate their pupils. Students at these schools -- many of whom live in poverty -- [tend to post lower-than-average test scores and have poor graduation rates](#). A number of these schools are also in ramshackle condition and have been for years.



Water leaks inside a Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School classroom in 2014.

The letter was signed by Democratic Sens. Al Franken and Amy Klobucha, along with Republican Rep. Erik Paulsen and Democratic Reps. Collin Peterson, Betty McCollum, Keith Ellison, Tim Walz and Rick Nolan. The lawmakers called on the White House to replace the Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School and fulfill its broader obligation to BIE schools across the country.

"The education of the students at BIE-funded schools is a trust responsibility of the United States, and ensuring adequate educational facilities is part of this responsibility. Addressing the critical health and safety hazards that exist at individual BIE facilities across the nation must be a central part of the BIE plan to construct and maintain safe schools for all of its students," the letter says.

The Obama administration has emphasized its commitment to Native American issues since [the president's visit to the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in 2014](#). Through [Generation Indigenous](#), the administration's initiative to engage Native youth, the White House has invested new grant money in reservation schools and community services. As part of the initiative, the White House hosted the first-ever Tribal Youth Gathering this summer.

However, these new initiatives have not been enough to fix many of the BIE's crumbling facilities. As of December 2014, about \$967 million was needed for repairs to BIE schools, according to a White House report at the time.



Condensation causes wet ceiling tiles at the Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School in the 2010-2011 school year.

"The substandard conditions at these schools -- including in our state of Minnesota -- are not conducive to educational achievement, and they unfairly restrict learning opportunities for the Native youth attending these schools," says the letter. "We have seen the deplorable conditions of these schools first hand in our state. The Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School in Minnesota is in dire need of replacement."

**Direct Link:** [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/bureau-of-indian-education\\_us\\_56b3e333e4b04f9b57d91014](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/bureau-of-indian-education_us_56b3e333e4b04f9b57d91014)

## Judge weighs fate of \$380 million left over in 2010 Native American farm suit



Under Secretary Tom Vilsack, shown, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has settled large class-action civil rights lawsuits brought by Native American and black farmers and ranchers. (Craig Lassig/European Pressphoto Agency)

By [Spencer S. Hsu](#) February 4

Native American farmers asked a federal judge Thursday to fix the “monumental” failure of a landmark civil rights settlement that has left \$380 million — more than half the total — unclaimed after the U.S. government agreed to pay the farmers for years of official discrimination.

The government in 2010 committed \$680 million to resolve a class-action lawsuit by thousands of Native American farmers and ranchers. The suit filed in 1999 alleged that the Agriculture Department discriminated against Native Americans in loan programs from 1981 to 1999.



Only about 3,600 successful claimants came forward after the settlement, not the more than 10,000 expected. Those who filed claims received roughly \$180 million plus \$60 million in tax payments on their behalf, not counting other relief on farm loan debt. About \$60 million went to attorneys.

But that left unclaimed the hundreds of millions set aside for the settlement and launched a battle over how to handle those funds.

“The scope of this failure is monumental; the reasons for it remain unclear,” U.S. District Judge Emmet G. Sullivan of the District wrote in July, calling the result a “cautionary tale” in class-action law.

Experts said the inability to distribute money to more aggrieved farmers could track to several factors: the department’s failure to keep records of applicants who previously had been denied loans, a history of skepticism in Indian country about federal promises and the hurdles of reaching poor and isolated Native Americans in remote areas who — based on previous calculation models used in litigation — were believed to have been engaged in agriculture.

Sullivan rejected competing proposals last summer to split the untapped \$380 million among class recipients — which the government opposed — or to distribute the money over 20 years through a trust led by Native Americans to charities selected by class attorneys. The dispute pit class members against one another and against lawyers who represented the overall group.

Instead, Sullivan called for new talks.

The original settlement cannot be changed after April 28 without agreement on what to do with the leftover funds, said John G. Dillard of Olsson Frank Weeda Terman Matz, a lawyer for lead plaintiff Marilyn Keepseagle, a North Dakota Sioux rancher.

Under those original terms, now criticized by all sides, what was expected to be a small amount of leftover money would have to be distributed in equal shares to nonprofit groups chosen by class attorneys.

Sullivan said that because of the larger amount left unclaimed that option “could be viewed as both unjust and inefficient.”

Attorneys for Keepseagle, the class and the department produced a new agreement in December, to award successful claimants an additional \$21,275 in cash and tax payments in their behalf — about \$77 million in all — atop the \$50,000 apiece most received initially.

Another \$38 million would go to nonprofit groups chosen by class counsel and the rest, would endow a Native American-led trust that could use its discretion to distribute money to nonprofit groups — an arrangement that could create the largest U.S. philanthropic institution to serve Native American farmers and ranchers.

About 70 percent of 300 written comments filed with the court, and several of nearly 100 people who filled Sullivan’s courtroom Thursday, opposed the proposal. Those who objected include individuals who had tried to collect through the settlement but were denied and those who had never filed and were left out altogether.

Three of four named class representatives, including Keepseagle and Claryca Mandan, a North Dakota rancher with the Hidatsa tribe, said that they believed that they had no choice but to accept the deal that includes some added payment to people like them but also creates the large trust and donations to charities.

“It is with a heavy heart and great reluctance we accept this meager amount,” Mandan said. “It was too much to risk not getting any money at all.”

Another representative, Keith Mandan, Claryca’s ex-husband, opposed it. Keith Mandan agreed with William H. “Billy” Smallwood Jr., a successful Choctaw claimant from Antlers, Okla., who filed a new lawsuit this week challenging the distribution of funds to “undeserving third parties” — including charities with no track record formed just to capture the taxpayer-funded windfall — at the expense of proven victims of discrimination.

Dillard said that he was “cautiously optimistic” the change would be approved, because time to make changes was running out for the court and for many aging farmers.

Of nine original class representatives, Keepseagle is now 78, four others are deceased, and one has dementia, Dillard said. “There’s real interest in going ahead and resolving this matter now,” he said.

Lead class attorney Joseph Sellers of Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll said the result was a compromise by all sides to serve “a community that has suffered enormous poverty over centuries and has extraordinary financial needs.”

Sellers said that he hoped the dispute over the leftover money would not distract from the case's achievements, which in addition to funds included a systematic review of farm loan rules and the creation of a Native American advisory council for the department.

**Direct Link:** [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/judge-weighs-fate-of-380-million-left-over-in-2010-native-american-farm-suit/2016/02/04/32f7f3e4-cac3-11e5-ae11-57b6aeab993f\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/judge-weighs-fate-of-380-million-left-over-in-2010-native-american-farm-suit/2016/02/04/32f7f3e4-cac3-11e5-ae11-57b6aeab993f_story.html)

## **Ending All Native Homelessness Next Federal Target**

Mark Fogarty  
2/4/16

The multi-agency effort just announced by the federal government to alleviate Native American veteran homelessness may just be the tip of the iceberg.

Last fall, eight federal agencies signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on an effort to end all Native American homelessness, not just Native veteran homelessness. The MOU specifically recognizes tribal sovereignty.

In November, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness signed an MOU with seven more federal agencies, the Departments of Interior, Labor, Veterans Affairs, Health and Human Services, Education, Agriculture, and Housing and Urban Development, "to work together on several key actions that will begin to address homelessness both on and off tribal lands," according to Lindsay Knotts, policy advisor for USICH.

USICH is in charge of an even larger strategic program, "Opening Doors," that seeks to end all homelessness anywhere in the country. Started in 2010, the program has been amended in both 2012 and 2015.

The November MOU, worked out after a report to USICH by the Interagency Working Group on Homelessness among American Indians and Alaska Natives has been informed by input from tribal leaders and urban Indian experts, according to Knotts in a posting on the USICH website.

Two of the agencies, HUD and VA, have just announced a joint effort (HUD-VASH) to alleviate homelessness among Native vets. The \$5.9 million effort envisions HUD providing vouchers for rental housing and the VA providing supportive services for the vets. This represents an extension to rural and reservation areas of a program that had formerly only been available through Public Housing Authorities, which are mainly urban.

HUD spokeswoman Heather Fluit noted that the amount allocated to the HUD-VASH effort was increased to \$5.9 million from the original \$4 million, because of the high volume of tribal requests for funds (26 tribes were awarded the money). However, she noted that Congress has yet to appropriate the funds.

The MOU in the larger effort to end all Native homelessness noted Native need was “both unique and uniquely underserved,” according to Knotts. She said the USICH focus on Natives is a result of treaties and trust obligations the federal government has to tribes.

The Council heard testimony that “while only 1.2 percent of the national population self-identifies as AI/AN, 2.3 percent of all people experiencing sheltered homelessness, 2 percent of all sheltered individuals, and 2.9 percent of all sheltered families self-identify as AI/AN. These data are primarily limited to Native Americans experiencing homelessness off tribal lands.

Also, “at least 8.8 percent of households in Native American communities are overcrowded compared with 3 percent nationwide. By some estimates, as many as one in five people (19 percent) living on tribal lands are living in overcrowded housing situations.”

But Knotts said these numbers do not fully reflect the housing crisis in tribal communities.

The group’s plan centers around four strategies:

- Improving access to housing and services through Administrative action, and providing guidance and technical assistance; and to increase the availability of housing options for Native Americans experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness both on and off tribal lands.
- Improving data collection on homelessness among Native Americans both on and off tribal lands.
- Ensuring that Federal strategies and actions to set a path to end Native American homelessness are informed by consultation and engagement with tribal leaders, urban native communities, and experts in the field.
- Elevating awareness of the crisis of homelessness and housing instability among Native Americans, both on and off tribal lands.

*Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2016/02/04/ending-all-native-homelessness-next-federal-target-163302>*

## **Pope Francis visit to celebrate Mexico's indigenous church**



SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico (AP) — Pope Francis' visit to the heavily indigenous Mexican state of Chiapas appears aimed at celebrating the region's "Indian church," a mix of Catholicism and indigenous culture once considered a thorn in the side of standard liturgy by the Vatican.

The inclusion of pine boughs and eggs, the Mayan faithful's references to "God the Father and Mother" and the use of indigenous elements in Masses long caused church officials to bristle.

Not so with history's first Latin American pope, who the Vatican said will present a decree during his Feb. 15 visit authorizing the use of indigenous languages. The Chiapas Mass itself would include readings and songs in three different indigenous languages.

"Within the church there have always been errors," said Felipe Arizmendi, the Bishop of San Cristobal de las Casas, the colonial city where Francis will preside over Mass. "So we recognize that many times, we have not given them (the indigenous) their place."

Francis' visit comes amid strong challenges to the church in the southern state, including huge inroads by evangelical Protestants and grinding poverty in a region rich with coffee, Mayan ruins, pine-covered hills and jungles. Chiapas has the high poverty rate in Mexico at 76.2 percent.

The challenges have always included the church's relations with indigenous communities who have struggled for centuries to maintain their traditions and independence, sometimes embracing and sometimes clashing with the hierarchy.



In this Jan. 17, 2016 photo, a Tzotzil Indian man prays in front of a religious image at the Church ...

Religious practices in some communities encourage rampant alcohol abuse, crushing debts and autocratic local bosses known as "caciques."

"Traditional" Catholic towns often require impoverished residents to go into debt to pay for annual, alcohol-fueled festivals for the local patron saint. Most of the food, drink, flowers and fireworks for the festivals are bought from the local bosses, who sell them to residents on credit at usurious rates.

In some communities, residents have expelled or ostracized any inhabitant who converts to Protestantism, often taking their lands or possessions, or denying them access to basic services like water or electricity.

Abdias Tovilla Jaime, an evangelical pastor at Chiapas' Revived Presbyterian Church, said the tactic doesn't appear to work; only 58 percent of Chiapas residents said they were Catholic in 2010, well below the national average of 83 percent.

"It is strange, we have seen the biggest growth in evangelical Christians in Chiapas in the towns where they are persecuted," Tovilla Jaime said.





In this Jan. 19, 2016 photo, Dominga Santiz wears a crucifix and a corn necklace in Oxchuc, Chiapas ...

Francis' embrace of at least some of Chiapas' indigenous versions of Catholicism is consistent for a pontiff who hasn't shied away from honoring causes and clerics who once ran afoul of Vatican authorities, often for putting into practice the church's "preferential option for the poor." During his 2015 visit to Bolivia, Francis prayed at the site where a Jesuit proponent of liberation theology was tortured and killed by paramilitary squads.

In Chiapas, Francis is scheduled to visit the diocese of San Cristobal, home to two of the most famed religious defenders of indigenous people in Mexican history: Bishops Bartolome de las Casas in the 16th century and Samuel Ruiz, who died in 2011.

Both were beloved by indigenous people and widely reviled among the wealthy classes and much of the church hierarchy. Many officials accused Ruiz of acting on behalf of the Zapatista rebels in their 1994 uprising for greater indigenous rights.

Part of the liberation theology movement that swept Latin America after the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s, Ruiz tried to fend off the rapid growth of Protestant denominations by adapting to indigenous customs.

One of his controversial measures was to rely heavily on married male lay workers because local culture granted more respect to men with children than to childless, celibate men such as priests. Some in the church worried the married deacons were taking on priestly functions.

In 2002, under Pope John Paul II, the Vatican council asked the Chiapas diocese to halt deacon ordinations. But under Francis, the ordinations were renewed.

"Still today, and not just in Chiapas but in other parts of Mexico and Latin America, some people don't take into account their (indigenous) languages, their customs, their rites, they despise all that as if it were something backward, when in fact they have a great wisdom. You just have to get close to them to know it," Bishop Arizmendi said.

**Direct Link:** <http://news.yahoo.com/pope-francis-visit-celebrate-mexicos-indigenous-church-185341610.html>

## **Pope Francis to be greeted by 19km of mobile phone lights on Mexico City visit**

Organisers want people to line road from the airport to the centre of the capital, holding phones aloft creating a 'wall of light and prayer'



Pope Francis in St Peter's Square, the Vatican. The pontiff arrives in Mexico next week when he is expected to be greeted by a 19km line of mobile phones lighting his way into the capital. Photograph: Alessandra Tarantino/AP

**Agence France-Presse**

Monday 8 February 2016 01.35 GMTLast modified on Monday 8 February 201601.37 GMT

Worshippers will line the roadside holding up their mobile telephones to light the way for [Pope Francis](#) when he arrives on his visit to Mexico next week.

The 79-year-old himself expressed “great happiness” at his looming visit, during which he will tour a major Catholic shrine in [Mexico](#) City and meet victims of violence and poverty.

Thousands of well-wishers are expected to come out to welcome the Argentine pontiff when he lands in Mexico City late on Friday. They want to make the longest ever human light chain on record.

They plan to line the 19km (12m) route from the airport to the Vatican’s diplomatic mission in the capital as the pontiff passes through in the Popemobile.

“We want to receive the Holy Father with a special wall, what we call a wall of light and prayer,” said Roberto Delgado, a member of the organising committee for the visit, on Sunday.

“We hope that with mobile phones, which are something that most people possess, we can make this light along the route the Holy Father will take,” he told a news conference.

Organisers played a video greeting from the pope himself.

“There is not long to go before my trip to Mexico and I am very happy. I feel great happiness. I have always had a special place in my prayers for all Mexicans,” he said.

The pope said he would fulfill one of his “greatest desires” by visiting the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City.

Organisers called on the faithful to bring rosary beads and pray for the pontiff as he passes along. They suggested bringing small electrical torches but no candles for safety reasons.

Delgado said they were aiming “to set a record by forming a human chain of light of 19kms (12 miles).”

“If people fill both lanes, then we are talking about practically 38 kilometers... That has never been done before in any country.”

The pope’s visit will run from 12 to 16 February and is scheduled to take in several Mexican states crippled by violence and poverty.

“I wish to come as a missionary of compassion and peace,” he said in the video.

His visit will include a mass in the city of Juarez, near the US border, plagued by violence and drug trafficking.

He will meet with indigenous peoples, prisoners and the families of victims of violence.

“I want to be as close to you as possible, but especially to those who suffer, to embrace them and tell them that Jesus loves them very much,” the pope said.

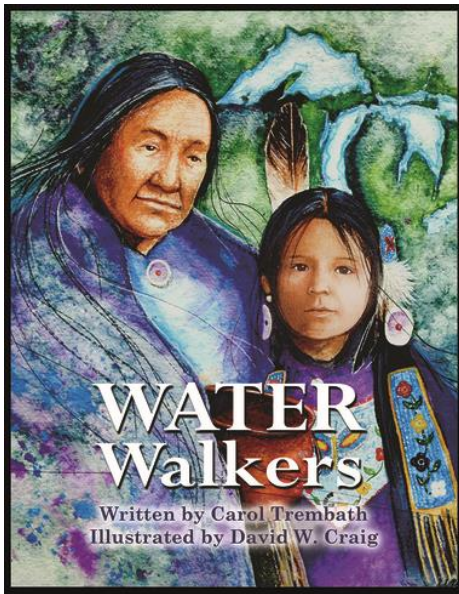
On the way to Mexico, the pope [will stop over in Cuba for a historic meeting](#) with the head of the Russian Orthodox Church.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/feb/08/pope-francis-to-be-greeted-by-19km-of-mobile-phone-lights-on-mexico-city-visit>

## **Children's book *Water Walkers* pays tribute to Native Americans dedicated to protecting our precious Great Lakes**

By Russ White

on February 05, 2016 at 1:07 PM, updated February 05, 2016 at 1:16 PM



by [Lauren Leffel](#)

Author and Michigan native Carol Trembath talks with [Kirk Heinze](#) about her captivating book [Water Walkers](#). The story describes the journey of Mai, a young Native American whose family members are walking around Lake Superior to raise awareness about the damage being done to the Great Lakes.

Trembath, formerly a teacher, librarian and media specialist, hopes that her book will give young readers a greater awareness of the Native American wisdom teachings and also become involved with protecting the environment that Native Americans love so dearly.

"As an educator, I realized how important it was for children to learn more about Native Americans and what is going on with our waters," Trembath says.

The legends and truths about environmental decay in the book are made simple and easy to understand with enchanting pictures of animals and nature seen through the eyes of young Mai.

The story is inspired by the true life events of Josephine Mandamin and other supporters who began the Mother Earth Water Walk around

Lake Superior in 2003. The group has since walked around all five Great Lakes and has followed many other waterways across the country, spreading the same message of preservation and protection.

"Native Americans have a long history of caring for the Earth, and we are just now catching on. They know very well that our water is in trouble. We need to listen to their wisdom and understand how important Native Americans are to our culture."

Click here to hear Trembath's conversation with Heinze.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.mlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2016/02/childrens\\_book\\_water\\_walkers\\_p.html](http://www.mlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2016/02/childrens_book_water_walkers_p.html)

## **Writers Group: 'Wizard of Oz' author had extreme views toward Native Americans**

*Rusty Brevik 2:05 p.m. CST February 6, 2016*

Lions and tigers, and Indians, oh my! Hmmm. That's not how it goes, you say? Lions and tigers, and bears, oh my! Ok. That's it.

This one enduring line from the equally enduring classic book "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" has over time been engraved into the minds of generation after generation of children. We are familiar with it and we all know the story. I took the liberty of altering a single word to make a point and draw a connection about the author. Lyman Frank Baum was a South Dakota resident for a short time. He also voiced some troubling views of its native people.

If there's "no place like home" perhaps Frank (as he was known) had some trouble finding his. His own yellow brick road was set for a path out West, away from his comfortable New York upbringing. I'm not even sure I would say that his yellow brick road was entirely paved with bricks. I like to think it turned to dirt the further west he went. Seems fitting to me that way.

The dream to succeed and the prospect for room to breathe were attractions that initially led him to Aberdeen. He arrived with his wife, Maud, and their sons in 1888. The flat, windy prairies of Northeast South Dakota must have seemed vast, untamed and full of possibilities to so many, including Frank. Aberdeen lay across that prairie but was hardly a little dusty town due to the expansion of railroads – it was truly the Hub City on the frontier.

Frank didn't waste any time settling in, pursuing various hobbies and businesses that ultimately failed. Aberdeen lacked a baseball team at the time while every other major city had one, and why shouldn't Aberdeen? He set about to start one. The Hub City Nine was formed as a baseball club and was successful not only on the field but off the field. The problem wasn't a lack of spectators but the lack of paying spectators. Enjoying the game from afar caused the club to lose money and Frank to give up its management.

Maybe a store would fare better? Baum's Bazaar, a store of fancy goods, opened with hype and buzz but a year later folded. Apparently people don't purchase "fancy goods" in a time of drought as it was in 1889. Poor Frank. Literally. Figuratively.

Since writing was something he had more than a knack for he turned to it once again, and started editing his own paper, the *Saturday Pioneer*. 1890 was also a year of massacre and fighting among the Native Americans and settlers, and Frank didn't shy away from writing about the current events of the day. The massacre at Wounded Knee would leave 153 Minneconjou Sioux dead once the cavalry opened fire against them. Many women and children were among the casualties. Sioux leader Sitting Bull had already been killed prior to this.

Frank reacted with his own editorials on both events. The full editorials can now be found online but suffice it to say his own words do advocate the extermination of the native people. His editorial on the death of Sitting Bull in his own words includes: "The whites, by law of conquest, by justice of civilization, are masters of the American continent, and the best safety of the frontier settlements will be secured by the total annihilation of the few remaining Indians. ... We cannot honestly regret their extermination."

A second editorial on Wounded Knee: "The 'Pioneer' has before declared that our only safety depends upon the total extermination of the Indians. Having wronged them for centuries we had better in order to protect our civilization, follow it up by one more wrong and wipe these untamed and untamable creatures from the face of the earth."

Some scholars have suggested that Baum was actually trying to rally sympathy for the Native Americans by employing a form of reverse psychology. It is true that he often used various pen names and had a tendency for talking out of both sides of his mouth, but my opinion is that he wrote it, he felt it and he probably meant it. The time period suggests that



his views, atrocious as they are, were probably actually not considered extremist. You can look to books, articles and other portrayals of the era that back this up.

By any measure, had he held these same views in 2016 and wished to go so far as to express them in his own newspaper today, the backlash would be swift and immediate. It would have disqualified him from being a successful children's author. Rightly so. The expression of genocidal views by a children's author just doesn't work.

We will never know his true intentions on this subject and only assumptions can be made. Many are unfamiliar with Frank's connections to our state, and this is but one angle of the extraordinary and real life of the man behind "OZ."

### **Rusty Brevik**

Rusty, 33, of Sioux Falls, is an engagement representative for Carsforsale.com. The opinions presented are his and do not represent the view of his employer.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.argusleader.com/story/opinion/voices/2016/02/06/writers-group-native-american-racism/79917658/>

## **Video: College Fund Ad Aims to Grow Native College Enrollment**

ICTMN Staff  
2/6/16

The American Indian College Fund's new advertising campaign centers around a staggering statistic—less than one percent of college students are American Indian. In an effort to increase Native college enrollment, the College Fund partnered with Portland-based advertising agency Wieden+Kennedy to create a public service announcement.

"We are in the business of ensuring that American Indian students are able to use modern tools to build better societies in their communities and in the United States. A college education is a critical tool we can help students access," said Cheryl Crazy Bull, [College Fund](#) president and CEO, in a press release. "Our new campaign bridges the traditional world of the students we serve with that of contemporary society, in a respectful way to Native cultures while giving the public a glimpse of our students. Startling statistics deserve a creative approach to drive the message home. We are particularly appreciative of our long relationship with Wieden+Kennedy that resulted in this exciting and beautiful campaign."

The campaign includes a 30 second television spot directed by Chel White and Bent Imagine Lab. The spot is inspired by Native beadwork, and uses stop-motion and

computer-generated rendering of beads in motion. The music in the spot was provided by Neil Young.

“We wanted to take a modern approach to traditional American Indian beadwork,” said Patty Orlando, Art Director at Wieden+Kennedy, in the release. “We spent a lot of time looking at the incredible photorealist bead pieces created by [Marcus Amerman](#) (a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and American Indian college graduate) and were immediately drawn to his complex and visually striking imagery.”

Amerman also created American Indian student portraits for the print ads. Each one features more than 18,000 tiny beads hand-stitched by the artist.

“Education is the answer” is the new tagline that is meant to inspire people to help Native American college students get a higher education.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2016/02/06/video-college-fund-ad-aims-grow-native-college-enrollment-163282>

## Church of Sweden apologises for 'racist' schooling of indigenous Sami children



**Ruth Gledhill** CHRISTIAN TODAY CONTRIBUTING EDITOR 05 February 2016



Saami/Facebook

The Sami people

The [Church of Sweden](#) has admitted to running segregated, racist schools for the country's ethnic Sami population.

The Church, the country's national Church and the world's largest Lutheran Church, acknowledged the schools were "based on racist ideas".

The confession came as the Church is trying to atone for the part it played in repressing the indigenous Sami people.

A two-volume 'White Book' has been published today, documenting its mistreatment of the Sami and focusing on the so-called Nomad Schools it ran between 1913 and 1962.

"It was a form of school whose ideology was based on racist ideas of superior and inferior races, and that took away from many Sami their language, culture and human dignity. One must describe where the pain persists, and what the abuse was," Archbishop Antje Jackelén told [Sweden's Dagens Nyheter newspaper](#).

The book has been published as part of the ongoing reconciliation process between the Church and the Sami, many of whom are Laestadian, a particularly conservative form of Lutheranism.

The nomad schools were set up because of a belief in the Church that those Sami who herded reindeers should be corralled within their historic way of life. In one school, the children until the 1940s lived in huts furnished with twigs and reindeer skins. They were taught basic skills only as they were not expected to reach a high educational level, and it was believed that their culture would be harmed if they were exposed to "civilisation".

Other Sami were encouraged to assimilate, where they were taught in Swedish which they did not understand. Their traditional names were removed from Church records and the traditional Yoik singing was banned.

Reindeer herders now make up about 10 per cent of the Sami peoples, or nearly 3,000 people in total.

Jackelén said: "It is good to take the troll out into the light, because then they disappear. There's been a silence surrounding this. Young people do not know what happened. The nomad schools were found throughout the Sami regions, from Karesuando to Jämtland. We must talk about it."

The publication of the White Book comes on the eve of National Sami Day, celebrated on February 6 in Norway, Sweden and other Scandinavian countries.

Earlier this week, the Sami won a 30-year battle for land rights when their village, Girjas, inside the Arctic Circle, won exclusive rights to local hunting and fishing. These same rights had been removed by Sweden's parliament in 1993.

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/church.of.sweden.apologises.for.racist.schooling.of.indigenous.sami.children/78800.htm>

## **Yakama Warriors to help with Memorial Day honors at Arlington National Cemetery**

**By Phil Ferolito**

Updated 23 hrs ago

TOPPENISH, Wash. — A veterans group on the Yakama reservation has been invited to provide special Memorial Day honors this year at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C., and members are raising funds to cover travel expenses.

Fourteen members of the Yakama Warriors Association plan to go, and their travel expenses will total about \$14,000, said Becky Corpuz, editor of the group's newsletter.

On Feb. 12-13, the group will hold a craft and bake sale at the Yakama Nation Cultural Center's Winter Lodge. Donated crafts made of buckskin and beads as well as baked pies, cookies, banana bread and even homemade chili and stew will be sold, Corpuz said.

"One of the veterans makes a great pot of stew," she said.

Since September, the group has raised roughly half the amount needed, she said.

For decades, the Yakama Warriors Association has maintained a notable presence both on the reservation and throughout the Yakima Valley — providing military honors at funerals; setting headstones; and helping veterans of all walks connect with military benefits, receive support and even form lifelong friendships.

Their efforts have caught the attention of veterans groups elsewhere. In 2005, members traveled to Sacaton, Ariz., to participate in a parade commemorating the 60th anniversary of the battle of Iwo Jima. The late Louis Cloud, a highly decorated World War II combat veteran and former Yakama tribal councilman, led the procession in honor of Ira Hayes, a Native American who helped raise the American flag over the island when it was won. The achievement was memorialized in the famous photograph by Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal.

This year, the national commander of the Native American Veterans Association asked the group to provide a color guard during Memorial Day events at Arlington and place wreaths at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Korean War Memorial.

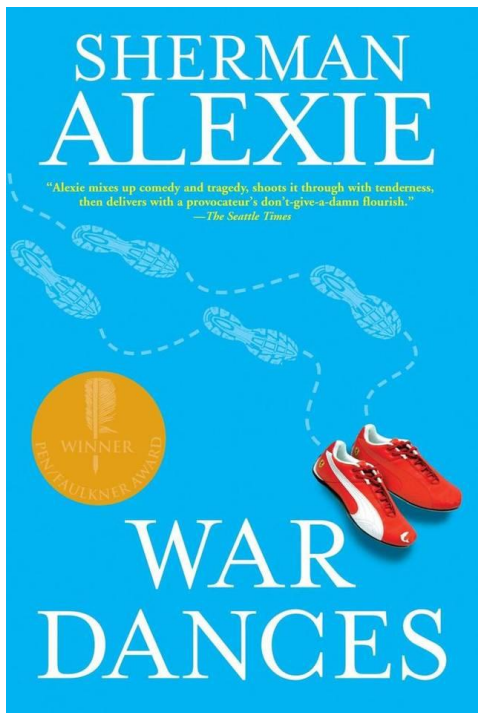
The Warriors will be the seventh Native American veterans group out of more than 560 tribes nationwide to take part in the event at Arlington.

“This is a great honor that the Warriors are invited as one of the veterans groups to be able to participate in the parade of colors at Arlington Cemetery,” said the group’s sub chief, Corky Ambrose.

“This is a memorable event which the group will be able to present to students at school assemblies.”

**Direct Link:** [http://www.yakimaherald.com/news/local/yakama-warriors-to-help-with-memorial-day-honors-at-arlington/article\\_4d8878d0-cd45-11e5-b054-2b1d6e421108.html](http://www.yakimaherald.com/news/local/yakama-warriors-to-help-with-memorial-day-honors-at-arlington/article_4d8878d0-cd45-11e5-b054-2b1d6e421108.html)

## **Sherman Alexie chosen author for the 2016 Pierce County Reads program**



Sherman Alexie's "Flight," one of five selected for the Pierce County Reads 2016 program. **Pierce County Library** Courtesy

BY ROSEMARY PONNEKANTI

This year, the Pierce County Reads program is breaking all of the stereotypes. Instead of a fairly new book with local relevance explored by a myriad of programs at Pierce County libraries, the annual community reads event has cut down to a handful of big non-library events, plus library book and film discussions, all centered around author Sherman Alexie.

Five books by the award-winning Northwest poet, novelist and screenwriter have been chosen, from short stories to novels to young adult, all dealing with contemporary Native American life. And to give you time to read all five, the Reads program is now 12 weeks long, from Sunday (Feb. 7) until Alexie speaks April 29 at Clover Park Technical College.

"We changed up the way we're doing programs this year," said Linda Farmer, Pierce County Library's communications director, who co-organizes the Reads program. "Instead of lots of little programs at every one of our 20 library locations, we focused on bigger, more regional topics that would draw people to the urban centers of the county."

The Reads program gives participants four weeks to read five of Alexie's best-selling books before eight weeks of programs at library and regional venues. The programs will be announced March 6 in The News Tribune and on the library's website.

Alexie's books span time and genre.

The young adult classic, "The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian" (2007), is largely autobiographical about a young Spokane Indian who decides to leave the reservation for a white high school. The young adult novel "Flight" (2007) is about an urban half-Indian teenager whose flight from foster care to extreme violence takes him on a time-traveling journey of redemption. The novel "Reservation Blues" (1995) is about what



happens when blues legend Robert Johnson leaves his guitar on the Spokane reservation. Short story collections “War Dances” (2009) and “The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven” (1993) deal, respectively, with urbanized and reservation Native Americans.

“We could have selected him a decade ago,” admits librarian Jaime Prothro, the program’s other co-organizer. “He’s among our staff’s favorite authors. But this year we were looking to explore fiction, after the last few years of nonfiction. And he’s local, he’s such a supporter of libraries and the freedom to read. And given where we’re at historically with race (issues), we wanted the chance to talk about diversity, identity, even parenthood. ... (Alexie) does such a good job of that.”

Alexie was born in 1966 on the Spokane Indian Reservation. He suffered hydrocephalus as a child and beat a drinking problem in his 20s, attending Gonzaga University and graduating from Washington State University. He’s been named one of the New Yorker’s top 20 writers for the 21st century and been awarded WSU’s Highest Alumni Award, the Katherine Anne Porter Award in Literature, the Pushcart Prize and, in 2014, a literature award by the American Academy for Arts and Letters. His books have received many awards, including a National Book Award for “The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian.” He wrote the screenplay for the film “Smoke Signals” (based on “The Lone Ranger”), which won two awards at the Sundance Film Festival.

He lives in Seattle with his family, working on sequels to “The Lone Ranger” and “The Absolutely True Diary,” and co-hosting the podcast “A Tiny Sense of Accomplishment.”

In his books and films, Alexie is a social commentator. He describes life for contemporary Native Americans with brutal honesty and pain, and gives an uncensored view of their side of American history. With some of his books banned by some school districts (though not Washington), he writes unflinchingly about alcohol, sex, drugs, racism and death, confronting taboos head-on with candor and black humor.

But above all, Alexie is a storyteller, infusing his prose with poetic metaphor and symbolism, and linking past and present in a continuous

whole. His characters reappear in different novels, relating to other characters and exploring their own lives and contemporary Native American culture with a mixture of adventure and philosophy. And he's not shy about talking live about these issues, earning the description from Men's Journal of "the world's first fast-talking, wisecracking, mediagenic American-Indian superstar."

"He's very vivacious, very funny, very charged up," says Prothro, who heard Alexie speak at a library association conference. "He told a lot of stories."

For the program's wrap-up, Alexie will speak and sign books at 7 p.m. April 29 at Clover Park Technical College's McGavick Conference Center. There'll be 45 minutes of "free-range Alexie," as Prothro puts it, followed by a 15-minute question-and-answer session. Alexie will meet beforehand with local Native American students. Books will be available for purchase at the event.

Will everyone in Pierce County love this Alexie book binge? Not necessarily. As well as heading up the 2014 Banned Books List, Alexie's been criticized for his negative stereotyping of Native Americans as no-good drunks, for his one-dimensional female characters, his lack of description and rushed pace. Reading all five of the Pierce County Reads selections in one go could be a depressing dive into a bleak landscape, and parents will want to read first to decide how much of it their kids can handle. Events in the books range from masturbation and eroticism to drugs, mass shootings and being burned to death.

"At times, his writing is unsettling," Prothro says. "On the other hand, it can be funny and beautiful. He does an outstanding job at reflecting all the emotions you feel in life, going from people being really insensitive in one chapter to boys just being in love with basketball in the next. It's lovely."

Above all what Prothro and her fellow librarians want Pierce County readers to get out of this year's program is a communal sense of empathy.

"Any time we do this program, the goal is to engage people in a variety of discussions, from events to libraries to just on the street. We're hoping that through these discussions, the level of empathy and understanding that our

community gets for when someone is an outsider, when they're not treated right, when they're challenged, makes us think how we can better understand and help."

Read more here: <http://www.thenewtribune.com/entertainment/arts-culture/article58653643.html#storylink=cpy>

## For Diné Beader, Business Is Good During Playoff, Super Bowl Season

Simon Moya-Smith

2/6/16

It's 6 p.m. on Thursday, and Lilah Sandoval sits with her brother at a pub and eatery in West Denver. Nearly every patron here has some form on Denver Broncos gear on, which is to be expected. The Denver Broncos will take on the Carolina Panthers at Super Bowl 50 in Santa Clara, California, on Sunday.

Sandoval is Diné, and the owner and operator of [Native Styles](#), a Denver-based beading company. She said business is good this time of year. Orders roll in for her sports-inspired medallions, which run upwards of copy50 a piece.

Lately, Native Americans in Denver are looking to Sandoval for Broncos medallions and earrings. She said Denver has a [large Native American community](#), and she imagines the majority are Broncos fans [some go the Oakland Raider way, she said. But few].

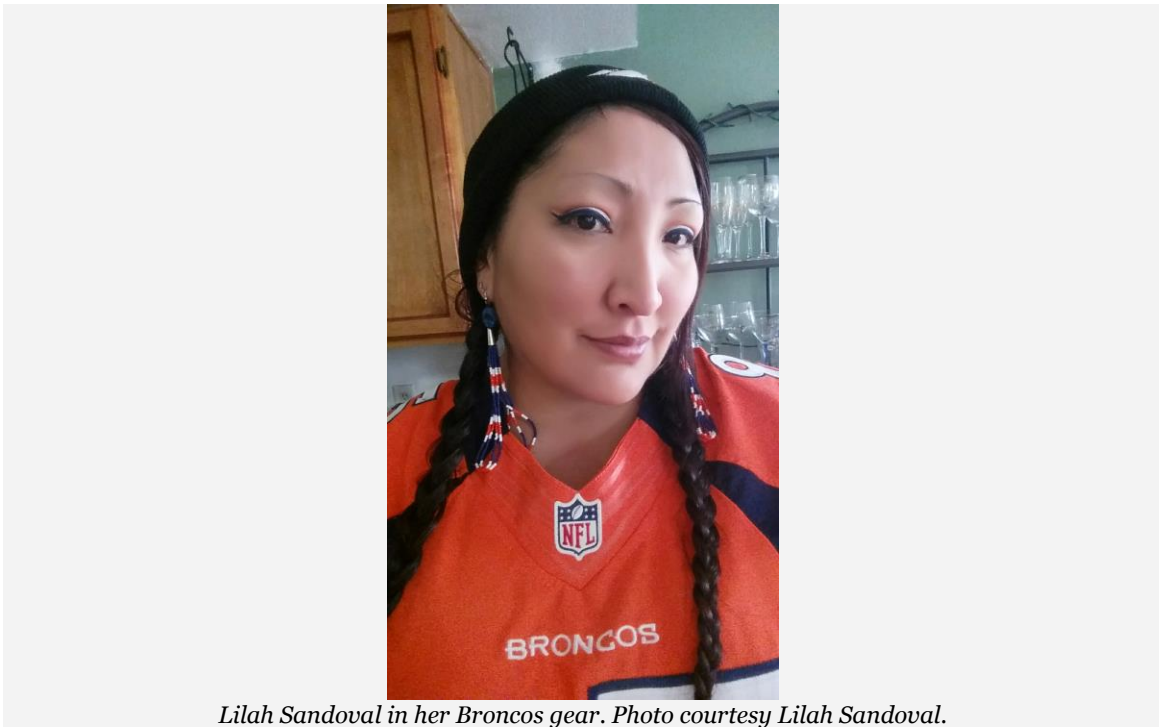


*A beaded Broncos medallion by Lilah Sandoval. Photo courtesy Lilah Sandoval.*



*Beaded Denver Broncos earrings. Photo courtesy Lilah Sandoval*

A self-described "die-hard" Broncos fan herself who will paint her face orange and blue for games, Sandoval said she begrudgingly made a Seattle Seahawks medallion in 2014 not long before the team played the Broncos at Super Bowl XLVIII. The Seahawks dealt a painful blow to the Broncos that year, having won 43 to 8.



*Lilah Sandoval in her Broncos gear. Photo courtesy Lilah Sandoval.*

"I was upset," she said. "I made [the Seahawks medallion] before the Super Bowl. Part of me thinks I jinxed [the Broncos]."

Sandoval, who studied at the University of Colorado Denver, said she does not consider herself an artist. "[Beading] started as a hobby," she said, adding her ex-boyfriend taught her the craft, and she has been doing it since 2000.

Sandoval said Native Americans in town also start submitting orders in preparation for the annual Denver March Powwow. Dancers will wear her beaded work on their regalia during the competition, she said. Some of her beaded ware can take two days to make. "Some take two weeks," she said.

There is, though, a time each year when Sandoval doesn't like watching her beloved Broncos: When they play the Washington NFL team.

"I don't like that. [Their mascot] isn't honoring us. I don't know why they can't change that," she said.

Sandoval added she doesn't like watching the Kansas City Chiefs either due to the cultural appropriation by fans in the stands who are oft painted in redface and wearing faux Native American headdresses.

Still, watching the Broncos is both cozy and cathartic for Sandoval. She said she enjoys the family element, everyone getting together to eat and chat, but she also revels in "yelling at the TV, letting your anger out. ... Just having a good time."

Sandoval is currently in the process of beading a lapel. And about the Broncos on Sunday?

"I know they're going to win," she said.

*Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2016/02/06/dine-beader-business-good-during-playoff-super-bowl-season-163329>*

## **Chesapeake woman recalls the legacy of her cousin, Civil Rights activist Rosa Parks**

By Bob Ruegsegger  
Correspondent

Feb 7, 2016





Rosa McCauley Parks – the mother of the American Civil Rights Movement – left an indelible mark on American history when she refused to relinquish her seat to a white passenger on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, on Dec. 1, 1955.

Parks' act of quiet courage was the spark that ignited the Montgomery Bus Boycott organized by Martin Luther King Jr. It was the first step in the desegregation of public transportation in that city. The boycott lasted 382 days.

Her second cousin, Jeanette Alberta McCauley, a Greenbrier West resident, believes that Parks' multi-ethnic bloodline – African American, Native American and Irish – had a great deal to do with her having the inner strength to challenge the injustice of segregation.

“A lot of people make the mistake of thinking that Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus to gain equality for blacks,” McCauley said. “That’s not, in fact, what she was doing. Rosa always fought for the equality of all people.”

From her home in Chesapeake, McCauley often travels to Native American powwows that celebrate culture and heritage. She believes the only thing that truly separates human beings is culture and that everyone should have the freedom to live their lives as they choose.

McCauley is also aware that there are those who do not subscribe to her philosophy of race and ethnicity.

If she's traveling in the South where she believes racism is still very much alive, she doesn't share her family connection to Parks with others.

"I have to be very careful. I do that to protect my children," McCauley said. "I have to keep in mind where I am and who I am dealing with."

Often children at powwows will recognize Rosa Parks from the family photos McCauley puts on display. When youngsters make the connection, it inspires McCauley to share her family memories.

"I always want to honor my cousin's memory and her legacy for what she did for this country," she said.

Capt. Charles Maurice Tallyrand McCauley was Rosa's great grandfather. He was Cherokee and Irish. He served in the 10th Battalion of North Carolina Heavy Artillery during the Civil War. Rosa's paternal great grandmother – Ghiogee – was a full-blooded Poarch Creek Indian.

Ghiogee eventually left Capt. McCauley and took their children back to reservation lands, but McCauley followed her and took his only son, Anderson McCauley, back to Georgia with him.

Anderson was Rosa Parks' grandfather. His wife was Louisa Collins, whose mother was a mixed-race slave.

"Rosa's mom, Leona ... was also a mix of African, white and Native American," Jeanette McCauley said.



James and Leona McCauley were Rosa's parents. Rosa was born in Tuskegee, Alabama, but the family eventually moved to the McCauley farm in Abbeville, Alabama, owned by Rosa's grandparents.

James McCauley, Rosa's father, and Robert McCauley Sr., Jeanette McCauley's grandfather, were brothers. They built and taught in the masonry and carpentry division of Tuskegee Institute.

Rosa and Jeanette's father, Robert McCauley Jr., were first cousins, making Rosa and Jeanette second cousins.

When she was 11, Jeanette met her cousin Rosa for the first time at an aunt's home in Stamford, Connecticut. She knew her only as "Auntie Rosa." Young Jeanette had no idea how illustrious her cousin was or how she had championed the Civil Rights struggle.

Jeanette McCauley grew up in Stephentown, New York, where a school assignment introduced her to her cousin's legacy.

Jeanette pulled a topic for research out of a hat. Selecting a strip of paper with Rosa Park's name on it was absolute coincidence. She had no idea that her cousin's last name was Parks.

Her father suggested Jeanette call her "Auntie Rosa" to gather material for the report.

At first, her teacher and other school officials did not believe Jeanette when she told them Rosa Parks was her cousin. To prove it, Parks called the school and her telephone call was broadcast over the school's intercom.

"Everybody could hear that Rosa Parks was our cousin. It was amazing," McCauley said. "Of course, I aced the report."

When Jeanette's father, Robert McCauley Jr., was in the Veterans Medical Center in Albany, New York, with heart problems, Parks went to visit him, McCauley said.

After Rosa agreed to a short interview for a local television station, people showed up in droves to meet her.

"It was really nice. It went on for hours and hours. People were lined up out the door and all the way up to the eighth floor," McCauley recalled.

Rosa Parks always found time for her family. She showed special affection for the children and young people.

"I was going to get a hotel room at a family reunion in Detroit," McCauley said. "She didn't want me to stay in the hotel with everybody else. I stayed in a room with her. Her family came first – always."

McCauley regards it "an honor and a privilege" to come from the same bloodline as Parks. She feels a responsibility to pass on the legacy she inherited.

"What Rosa did, she did for the equality of all people," McCauley emphasized. "I try to instill in these kids that racism and hatred is not something you inherit. That's something you're taught. There's no need for anybody to teach that ill will and hate."

One of the main things Parks taught her younger cousin was that all human beings deserve to be treated as equals. Another was that, with God, she could do anything.

"She was a beautiful lady. When you were in her presence, you just felt a quiet strength in the room," McCauley said. "It made the hair on the back of your neck stand up. It was amazing."

**Direct Link:** [http://pilotonline.com/news/local/chesapeake-woman-recalls-the-legacy-of-her-cousin-civil-rights/article\\_d75c2bfd-1e5b-5c5a-bc09-e38f133362c7.html](http://pilotonline.com/news/local/chesapeake-woman-recalls-the-legacy-of-her-cousin-civil-rights/article_d75c2bfd-1e5b-5c5a-bc09-e38f133362c7.html)

# This Native American Chef Is Championing Food Justice in the Most Innovative Way

By **Darnell L. Moore** February 9, 2016 10:55 AM

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Access to healthy food is a social justice and public health issue. But it is a concern that [receives far less attention](#) than other systemic forms of inequity — like police misconduct or mass incarceration — despite the ways food insecurity wreaks havoc on the bodies of vulnerable populations in the U.S.

Money, proximity to grocery stores and even the recipes used to prepare food are often [determinants](#) for lower or higher rates of mortality, especially in urban and rural areas where access to healthy food is limited — areas often referenced as [food deserts](#). Food security and access is a critical social justice issue among Native American communities, in particular, and it's an issue some activists are confronting in innovative ways.



**Native American health outcomes may be shaped by food access:** The population of American Indians and Alaska Natives is an estimated 3.7 million, according to the [Indian Health Service's division](#) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. And yet, Native Americans have a [life expectancy that is 4.2 years fewer](#) than all racial groups in the U.S.

Among Native Americans, [heart diseases](#), malignant neoplasm (various forms of cancer), unintentional injuries and chronic lower respiratory diseases are leading causes of death, according to the IHS. American Indian and Native Alaskan adults also face higher rates of obesity than Caucasians, according to the Department of Health and Human Services' [Office of Minority Health](#). In addition, 16.1% of indigenous people suffer from Type II diabetes, according to the [American Diabetes Association](#).

Children are also impacted. Native American children have nearly "twice the levels of food insecurity, obesity, and Type II diabetes, relative to the averages for all U.S. children of similar ages" according to a 2012 [report](#) by Mathematica Policy Research. The food and water Native Americans have access to, or not, may play a critical role in their ability to live full and healthy lives.

"Access to clean drinking water is intimately tied to food insecurity, especially for rural areas," Taté Walker, Mniconjou Lakota, editor of *Native Peoples* magazine, told *Mic*. "The Navajo Nation, for instance, was the recipient of the devastating Colorado mine spill few months ago and is still experiencing fallout from that, yet the national conversation is centered on Flint. If you don't have water, you're dead."

**Historical displacement of Native peoples shifted indigenous ways of life:** The issues impacting Native Americans' food security and health outcomes are not novel consequences of inequity. There's a historical context to these longstanding problems, especially among those living on or near the approximately [326 reservations and other tribal lands](#) in the U.S.

The [Indian Removal Act of 1830](#) — a law passed by Congress under President Andrew Jackson — authorized the displacement of Indian tribes from their indigenous homelands. Native Americans were forced to move to federally controlled territories west of the Mississippi River. "Displacing Natives from land and food sources was a purposeful act of genocide by the U.S. government," Walker told *Mic*.

The isolation extended far beyond geographical boundaries, it also meant that Native Americans were separated from the plant life, vegetables, livestock and wild animals indigenous to their diets and food traditions. And beyond Native American lives, knowledge of traditional foods were suppressed as well.

Sources of food that followed the spread of processed foods, or commodities, distributed by the government, have become unhealthy staples today. Kai Ryssdal, host and senior editor of [Marketplace](#), estimates processed foods [comprise 70%](#) of what most people consume in the U.S.



Karen Drift, a Bois Forte Ojibwe elder who lives on Bois Forte Reservation, talking about the need to preserve tradition. Source: [Mic](#)

"Those original commodities were not healthy for the people," Fran Miller, community nutritionist for the Suquamish Tribe in Washington state, told [Food Safety News](#). "They moved to a lot of highly processed foods really quickly. At the same time, they lost that physically active lifestyle that was practiced because they had to be active to hunt and gather and fish. That's why we've seen a rapid increase in obesity and diabetes within the last 150 years or so."

**The fight against oppression foods:** Food commodities — like flour, lard and sugar — are what [Chef Sean Sherman](#) (popularly known as "The Sioux Chef"), a member of the Oglala Lakota peoples in South Dakota, called "oppression food" in this week's episode of [The Movement](#).

Sherman [advocates](#) for a return to "pre-reservation" indigenous foods used by Native American peoples prior to colonization and displacement from their lands. His activism comes in the form of culinary arts. His protest takes place in the kitchen.

The Minneapolis-based caterer and food educator provides cooking classes, offers speeches and food demonstrations with the purpose of restoring traditional Native American foods and flavors to prominence in Native communities and beyond.



Chef Sherman preparing a meal at Bois Forte using traditional food items. Source: [Mic](#)

Sherman's return to traditional foods could prove transformative in places like the [Bois Forte Reservation](#) where I interviewed him. A gas station is the closest "store" where processed and frozen food items can be purchased. To get to a supermarket where fresh and healthy foods are served, people have to travel 34 miles to the closest market and 62 for a full supermarket. Bois Forte Reservation is a food desert not unlike some others.

A 2013 [report](#) on access to healthy food by PolicyLink, a national research and action institute, stated "In rural areas, 10 miles is typically considered an acceptable distance to travel to a grocery store, supermarket, or other retail food outlet. However, it is not uncommon for the closest grocery store to be much farther away, and people living in low income, rural communities typically have the farthest distances to travel to access healthy food."

This is a problem — one that is disproportionately impacting working-poor and poor people living in the rural and urban food deserts of the U.S. Native American communities are particularly vulnerable. The food commerce industries, government, and consumers are implicated. Yet, Sherman's solution of returning to the foods and food

gathering practices of one's traditions is a solution that may have life-changing, and life-extending, consequences.

Instead of eating foods that oppress the body, Sherman insists we consume the foods that sustain and enliven it instead.

**Direct Link:** <http://news.yahoo.com/native-american-chef-championing-food-155500882.html>

## **Oldest Native American Church to James Mooney: Marijuana Is Not Our Sacrament**

ICTMN Staff

2/8/16

*The following is an official statement from the Native American Church in regards to Flaming Eagle Mooney and Oklevueha.*

The Native American Church of South Dakota (NACSD), is the oldest Native American Church within Lakota Territory and the State of South Dakota incorporated October 5, 1922. The NACSD is based within the boundaries of the Pine Ridge Agency – Oglala Sioux Tribe and serves its membership throughout the State and Lakota Territory.

As the oldest organization existing from Lakota ancestral lineage and serving its Lakota members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe; the Native American Church of South Dakota presents this position:

- The Native American Church of South Dakota has no knowledge or existence of the Oklevueha Lakota Sioux Nation Native American Church;
- The Native American Church of South Dakota does not know James Warren Mooney;
- The Native American Church of South Dakota stands firm with the Fool Bull family against the misrepresentation of the Fool Bull Family name by the Oklevueha organization's;
- The Native American Church of South Dakota does not condone the use of Marijuana as a sacrament of the Native American Church. The Native American Church of South Dakota's cultural values & teachings along with its mission statement recognized the Holy Peyote as the only Sacrament of the Native American Church. The preservation of our Sacrament Peyote is standing true to what has been handed down to us as a Native American Church. It is a deep disrespect to Lakota NAC leadership/Elders/Wisdom Keepers who fought and died for our NAC ceremonial way of life to consider marijuana as a sacrament of the Native American Church.



Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2016/02/08/oldest-native-american-church-james-mooney-marijuana-not-our-sacrament-163350>

# Indigenous Activists in Seattle Launch a "Stop Disenrollment" Campaign

by [Sydney Brownstone](#) · Feb 8, 2016 at 5:06 pm



**Matt Remle, a local Native American activist, displays his message against disenrollment in Lakota: áthąŋŋ šni, which means "to make invisible, to vanish."** STOPDISENROLLMENT.COM

A group of indigenous activists based in Seattle launched an **online campaign against tribal disenrollment**—the process by which tribal governments **reject their own tribal members**—today. A website ([stopdisenrollment.com](http://stopdisenrollment.com)) dedicated to the cause is collecting individual stories and photos of statements written on activists' hands.

The action's goal, according to a press release put out this morning, is to "attract representatives of all 567 federally-recognized tribes in the United States" and "**ultimately attract as many participants as there are disenrolled Indians.**"

One of the most notorious, local tribal disenrollments in recent history has come by way of the Nooksack Tribe. In 2013, the Nooksack Tribal Council attempted to disown **306 of its 2,000 tribal members**, a process that is now being disputed in court. The "Nooksack 306," as those facing disenrollment call themselves, have posted several "Stop Disenrollment" messages on the group's Facebook page today, along with the hashtag #WeBelong.

Gabriel Galanda, a Nomlaki/Concow lawyer fighting the Nooksack disenrollment, has called the trend of disenrollments an "epidemic." While Galanda has pointed out that disenrollments often afflict gaming tribes **whose profits are shared among tribal members**, the lawyer is also drawing attention to disenrollment's historical roots. In an op-ed for *Indian Country Today Media Network*, he explained more:

The United States originally taught disenrollment to American indigenous peoples **as a mode of Indian assimilation**. Indian "rolls" and removal from those rolls were introduced to indigenous peoples in the 1800s, chiefly to dispossess tribal communities of land through allotment. By the 1930s "disenrollment" was imparted to tribal governments under guise of Indian reorganization, via boilerplate tribal constitutions. And, like whiskey and smallpox blankets in times before, the federal government also introduced "membership" and "blood quantum" to American indigenous peoples.

Several famous Stop Disenrollment activists have posted messages with similar themes. Louie Gong, the Seattle-based Nooksack artist (he crafted the bentwood box **gifted to Chinese president Xi Jinping** during the president's visit to Seattle), posted a photo of himself on the Stop Disenrollment website with the words, **"colonial dreams come true"** written on his palm. Winona LaDuke, an environmental activist and Anishinaabekwe member of the Mississippi Band Anishinaabeg, posted a photo with the word "theft."

Check out the full website **here**.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thestranger.com/blogs/slog/2016/02/08/23543072/indigenous-activists-in-seattle-launch-a-stop-disenrollment-campaign>

## 'It's Really a Joy to Be Alive,' Says Native American Victim of Hit-and-Run

Gabriela Maya Bernadett  
2/10/16

On January 25, 2015, powwow dancer Isaac Wak Wak's life changed forever.

A member of the Colville Tribe of Washington and beloved figure in the Denver, Colorado, Native American community, [Wak Wak was hit by a vehicle](#) while leaving the National Western Stock Show.



*Isaac Wak Wak and his niece MorningStar at the National Western Stock Show one year after the accident. Photo courtesy Dina Yazzie.*

A little over a year later, after 13 surgeries and months in the hospital, Wak Wak says he is “doing fantastic.” The 72-year-old is now walking with the support of a cane, driving, and in excellent spirits.

When the incident first happened, Wak Wak had no idea how serious it was. All he remembers, he says, is walking across the street to unlock his car and then everything went black. When he came to he found himself at Denver Health. He thought he had just broken his arm, but the doctor told him what really happened and that he almost died. “I was flabbergasted, confused, and hurt all wrapped up in one,” Wak Wak said when he found out. It turned out that he broke both arms, both legs and his pelvis.

The months Wak Wak spent in the hospital recovering were trying, to say the least. Doctors would come in as early as 5:30 a.m. in the morning to check on him, and he was placed on bed rest for two months straight. However, Wak Wak had plenty of friends, family, and members of the local Native American community visit him throughout his

time there, including the Indian Unity Youth Group. He was very appreciative of all the support.

The hospital staff were amazed at his rapid recovery. One of Wak Wak's relatives, Dina Yazzie, noted that "His health was progressing so quickly, it seemed like he went from wheelchair to walker to cane in a flash." Indeed, to go from a wheelchair to a walker to a cane within one year of a severe hit-and-run accident at the age of 71 is nothing short of amazing. "Your body is in fantastic shape," Wak Wak remembers the doctor telling him.

The President of the stock show gave Wak Wak VIP tickets to come back, so a year to the day Wak Wak returned to the place that almost killed him. He loves rodeos and the stock show part, and was glad to be back. He saw a lot of people who saw him on TV, and were flabbergasted he got hit.

The Colorado State Patrol, which investigated the incident, never developed any leads to identify a suspect so the perpetrator was never found. When asked how he feels about this, Wak Wak says "At first I was mad at the person, but now I'm not. Karma will get them. It was just so frightening I just wanted to forgive." Similarly, Yazzie acknowledges that though the person wasn't found, "there's much bigger things we're grateful for. It happened, we're not dwelling on it. You just have to move on and look forward to a better year."

One of the first big events that Wak Wak is excited for is the Denver March Powwow. He loves the powwow trail, and is determined to dance in it this year. He says that he has six gentlemen to dance with him and bring him back into the circle, and it is the main thing he is living for now.



*Wak Wak with his Denver family at the Denver March Powwow in 2014, a year before the hit-and-run incident. His relative Dina Yazzie, second from left, helped care for him throughout the ordeal. Photo courtesy Dina Yazzie.*

If there is anything that this experience has taught him, Wak Wak says, it's that "I just respect life even more, I love it even more. I just keep thanking the Creator every day, and the Elders that were looking down on me."

According to [9news.com](http://9news.com), 1.3 people a day in Denver, Aurora, and Lakewood, Colorado, were injured by hit-and-run drivers in 2014, an increase from 1.2 a day between 2011 and 2013. In that same year bracket, 28-percent of all accidents in Denver involved someone leaving the scene. The national average is closer to 10-percent. Denver has averaged 17 hit-and-runs a day since 2011 (most were minor fender benders.) Many cases of hit-and-runs go unsolved.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2016/02/10/its-really-joy-be-alive-says-native-american-victim-hit-and-run-163373>

## UA Study Debunks Native American Alcohol Use Myths

Story by Sara Hammond  
LAST UPDATED FEBRUARY 9, 2016

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The beliefs are long-held and often-repeated— Native Americans have a high rate of alcohol use and abuse. Now, University of Arizona research refutes those myths.

College of Medicine researchers analyzed data from several multiyear surveys and published their conclusions this week. Heavy alcohol use and binge-drinking rates are nearly identical between Native Americans and whites. The study found Native Americans are more likely, 60 percent, than whites, 43 percent, to abstain altogether from alcohol use.

"People have this assumption that everyone on the reservation has an alcohol problem or at least it's more excessive than it is anywhere else, and I think we know that's not true," said Teshia Solomon, director of the Native American Research and Training Center at the UA.

Solomon is a member of the Choctaw Nation and co-authored the study.

James Cunningham, of the Family and Community Medicine department, led the research. He said negative stereotyping can create health disparities.

“Sometimes it’s possible that if a patient comes in and is looking for help from a doctor and the doctor believes in this stereotype, and it’s a very common belief, it may be biased toward looking toward alcoholism as an explanation for some of the health problems,” Cunningham said.

Native Americans seeking a job may not get serious consideration for a position because an employer believes that the person may abuse alcohol, he said.

The study’s findings will be shared next week at the training and research center’s annual conference for Native American researchers and with tribal leaders.

*The Arizona Science Desk is a collaboration of public broadcasting entities in the state, including Arizona Public Media.*

**Direct Link:** <https://www.azpm.org/p/crawler-stories/2016/2/10/81686-ua-study-debunks-native-american-alcohol-use-myths/>

## **Big Tobacco is suffocating Indians' cigarette business**

By Paul O. Thompson and Barry Snyder Sr., Commentary

**Published 4:26 pm, Tuesday, February 9, 2016**

The burgeoning Native American cigarette trade, so vital for the existence of many tribes, has become the setting for a David vs. Goliath battle among Native American small business owners, Big Tobacco and the U.S. government — and Big Tobacco is winning.

First, some background. Today, a quarter of Native Americans are steeped in poverty. The White House describes issues facing young

people on native territories as "a national crisis" and a "state of emergency." Homes lack basic services, such as electricity and running water. Schools on reservations are crumbling. Some reservations are plagued by unemployment rates that reach 70 percent.

The unending cycle of Native American poverty is a story told since the federal government began confining Native Americans to remote and desolate lands. From this desolate existence emerged an entrepreneurial spirit and the drive to be self-sufficient. Small family businesses developed with a focus upon traditional tribal values, including the cultivation and sale of tobacco.

For centuries, Native Americans cultivated tobacco for use in sacred ceremonial prayer, blessings, healings, and for trade. Following the arrival of European settlers, Native Americans heavily relied upon this plant for trade and barter. The tobacco leaf allowed Native Americans to survive, despite the loss of fertile lands to the increasing agrarian population of white, European farmers. Eventually, tobacco evolved beyond its tribal status as a spiritual plant to become an essential economic lifeline for basic tribal necessities.

In this environment of crisis, some tribes and tribal members followed their ancestors, cultivating and selling tobacco to improve the daily lives of their families, friends and neighbors. Operating in compliance with tribal laws and regulations, these small businesses provided meaningful jobs where none existed and funded tribal governments with a crucial stream of revenue. Profits provide funding for medical care, food security for the elderly and other public welfare systems, as well as housing, education and infrastructure.

Paul O. Thompson is a former tribal chief of the St. Regis Mohawk Nation. Barry Snyder Sr. is a former president of the Seneca Nation.



Smelling unrealized profit, the largest three tobacco companies in the United States — Philip Morris USA (Altria), R.J. Reynolds (Reynolds American), and Lorillard (now part of Reynolds) — apply a windfall of cash and enormous political pressure on the federal government to snuff out the small Native American tobacco manufacturers.

The situation is particularly acute in New York. For example, in 2011, Altria, parent of Phillip Morris, issued a "white paper" urging that the feds crack down on Indian manufacturers. Big Tobacco has accused Native American manufacturers of inflating New York's black market, despite the smuggling problem being predominantly one of Big Tobacco's name brand cigarettes. And, just last year, R.J. Reynolds filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture for failing to collect Tobacco Trust Fund fees against two New York tribal cigarette manufacturers.

Although that lawsuit was recently dismissed, the message is clear: Big Tobacco, concerned about its American monopoly, will use whatever means necessary to stifle any competition, no matter how small.

Now, despite conflicts with Indian sovereignty, Big Government has moved on Big Tobacco's behalf, threatening criminal prosecution against several small Native American cigarette manufacturers, despite their insignificant impact on gross cigarette sales. Rare is the small business owner who can afford to risk liberty and property when threatened by the enormous weight of Uncle Sam, especially those who are Native American. This assault by Big Government on behalf of Big Tobacco creates a serious, long-term crisis for the nation's 567 Native American tribes and their long-held concepts of Native American sovereignty and right to self-governance.

The motives of the federal government are unclear. It's hard to believe that this is the policy of the Obama Justice Department. It's also hard to

imagine that the department is doing the bidding of Big Tobacco, which can be the only beneficiary while tribal communities suffer.

On its face, shutting down small family-owned Native American tobacco manufacturers may appear to be a noble public health issue, with increasing awareness of the detriments of tobacco. But tobacco, a legal substance, isn't going away and the tobacco cartel knows that.

With Native American manufacturers being shuttered, most of the nation's 567 tribes and the reservations on which they remain will now fall further into true abject poverty. And, at their expense, the only winner here is Big Tobacco.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.timesunion.com/tuplus-opinion/article/Big-Tobacco-is-suffocating-Indians-cigarette-6818530.php>

## Health Buzz: Dementia Most Common in African Americans, Native Americans

More than 1 in 4 people who survive to age 65 will be diagnosed with dementia in their lifetime.



Dementia projections don't look good for any race or ethnicity.

By [Samantha Costa](#) Feb. 10, 2016, at 5:36 p.m. + More

If you're standing in a room with three other colleagues, friends or family members right now, one of you – no matter your race or ethnicity – will be diagnosed with [dementia](#) in your lifetime. Those are the troubling statistics from a study published today in the journal [Alzheimer's and Dementia](#). African Americans have the greatest likelihood.

The study culled information from the electronic health records of more than 274,000 health care members from Kaiser Permanente, a large health care system based in Northern California. Researchers examined the likelihood of [Alzheimer's disease](#), vascular dementia or non-specific dementia incidence among six racial and ethnic groups: whites, Asian Americans, Latinos, African Americans, Native Americans/Alaskan Natives and Pacific Islanders.

"Most research on disparities in dementia includes only one to two racial and ethnic groups, for example only whites and African Americans," Elizabeth Rose Mayeda, study author and postdoctoral fellow at University of California–San Francisco in the department of epidemiology and biostatistics, said in a press release. "Our study is the only work that compares dementia for these six racial and ethnic groups representing the aging demographic of the United States in a single study population. It is also the first study to look at incidence of dementia in Pacific Islanders and American Indians."

Findings reveal that over the 14-year study period, the annual rate of [dementia](#) was 26.6 cases per 1,000 people for African Americans, 22.2 cases per 1,000 people for Native Americans/Alaskan Natives and 15.2 cases per 1,000 people for Asian Americans. Latinos had an annual rate of 19.6 cases, and whites had an annual rate of 19.3 per 1,000 cases.

"These findings underscore the need for further research to better understand risk factors for dementia throughout life to identify strategies to eliminate these inequalities," Mayeda said in the release.

The study authors project that in the next 25 years, 38 percent of African Americans older than 65 will develop dementia. The same is true for 35 percent of Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, 32 percent of Latinos, 25 percent of Pacific Islanders, 30 percent of whites and 28 percent of Asian Americans in the same age group.

**Direct Link:** <http://health.usnews.com/health-news/health-wellness/articles/2016-02-10/dementia-most-common-in-african-americans-native-americans>

# Grand Terrace Native American clinic among 10 others to cut services

By **Anthony Victoria** -

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Courtesy Photo: The San Manuel Clinic, located at 11980 Mt. Vernon Avenue in Grand Terrace.

As of April 1, the Riverside-San Bernardino County Indian Health, Inc. (RSBCIHI) will cease providing health care services to indirect descendants of California Natives.

In December the RSBCIHI board made the decision to efficiently serve Indian communities—including at a nearby Grand Terrace facility—by terminating services to those who are not direct descendants. According to an official statement, those who want to remain receiving services must prove that they are direct descendants of Indians by providing a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), a tribal membership card from a federally-recognized Indian tribe, or other documents demonstrating that one is a direct relative.

“The Directors have concluded that ‘Indian descent’ means persons who are direct descendants of Indians, for example, a child, a grandchild, or great grandchild of an Indian,” said RSBCIHI chief executive officer Jess Montoya in a Dec 1 letter sent out to clinic patients.

Montoya wrote that persons who are cousins, nephews, or aunts of Indians and not related by blood are not direct descendants. RSBCIHI administration did not return repeated calls for comment.

Some Native Americans, such as Catherine Copetillo of Highland, said the decision should not affect older benefactors, as many are fully dependant on services.

"It's not right to vote us out," she said. "Many of us will have to rely on MediCal and Medicare, which only provides so much."

The 65-year-old said she is very proud of her background and heritage, and criticizes the manner in which the RSBCIHI is conducting their health affairs.

"They give us attitude when we ask for help," said Copetillo. "It's like they're hiding something. Who are they to judge and decide who is Indian. I mean, who do they think they are?"

Desiree Williams of Highland said the organization is going back on its mission statement, which according to the RSBCIHI website, is "to share the values and traditions, strengthen the body, promote peace of mind, and empower dreams to all those who come through our doors."

"Look at what they're doing to other Indians," Williams said. "They're going back on their word."

Williams, who depended on the clinic's dental, optometry, pharmacy, and radiology services, believes the issue of not providing services to indirect descendants is one of politics.

"I don't understand why they are biased on bloodline," she said. "I think them taking us and others off of their care is a front. There is something else going on. They have enough money to provide care for all Indians."

Williams and her relatives possess documentation from the BIA that state they are descendants of a great uncle who was registered on the 1928 California Roll of Indians.

"To the clinics, it all come down the fact that my great uncle was on the roll—not my grandfather. You tell me: How does that make me and my relatives any less Native American?" intoned Williams.

Besides the Mt. Vernon Avenue location in Grand Terrace, RSBCIHI currently serves clients with 10 clinics in the greater San Bernardino-Riverside County areas.

**Direct Link:** <http://iecn.com/grand-terrace-native-american-clinic-among-10-others-cut-services/>

## **Resolution to return much of Black Hills to Native Americans fails**

Bob Mercer Journal correspondent

8 hrs ago

PIERRE | State lawmakers from both major political parties united Wednesday in rejecting a resolution that urged the return of some lands in the Black Hills to Native American tribes who were forced onto reservations in the late 1800s.

The House State Affairs Committee voted 13-0 against the request from state Rep. Shawn Bordeaux, D-Mission, who said he serves on the Rosebud Sioux Tribe's treaty council.

As he began to testify, Bordeaux said he didn't have a copy of his resolution.

But, he continued, he had a copy of the 1868 treaty that gave the tribes the vast lands west of the Missouri River to the Big Horn mountain range, covering big parts of South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, Nebraska, Kansas and Colorado.

He quoted the 1980 U.S. Supreme Court decision that called the loss of the lands by tribes an “illegal taking.”

The resolution called for “fair and full compensation,” the return of “select lands” in the Black Hills National Forest and creation of a national commission.

The resolution specifically excluded private lands and homes and said “essential federal lands” such as Mount Rushmore, national park properties, U.S. postal lands, Ellsworth Air Force Base and other lands “essential for the national interest” shall be undisturbed.

Bordeaux said the tribes aren’t ready to manage it and would need a partner such as state government.

“I’m not sure if you all know what’s at stake here,” he said, noting the tribal territory began “a few blocks away from here” on the west bank of the Missouri River.

No one else testified for the resolution, and no one testified against it.

Bordeaux said there are 11 acres of tribal trust land just across the river at the Wakpa Sica site that was to be a home for a proposed tribal Supreme Court.

“I don’t know why there isn’t a casino there already,” he said, adding, “I’m just kidding.”

Bordeaux said tribes in South Dakota would like “to tell the story from our view” if they could get “a few acres here and there.”

He said land could be used for religious observances and to make presentations to tourists about tribal culture, struggles, opportunities and religion, such as the origin story that Native American people emerged from Wind Cave.

“Just as much as the snake talks to Eve,” he said, “we have our own belief system.”



“The Black Hills, if we could get 1 acre back, would be a big thing for our tribe and for the generations to come,” he said.

Bordeaux referred to the 1990 year of reconciliation proclaimed by then-Gov. George S. Mickelson and the subsequent century of reconciliation that now should be at 125 years.

One of the House committee members was Rep. G. Mark Mickelson, R-Sioux Falls, a son of the governor. Mickelson told Bordeaux said the theme of the resolution “is something you would find broad support for” but the phrase “select federal lands” brings unease.

“The Black Hills are important to a lot of people,” Mickelson said. “What are you looking for in terms of select federal lands?”

Bordeaux said "all" but added that’s not likely to happen.

“Somewhere in the middle the great negotiation is waiting to happen,” Bordeaux said. “I see this as a win-win for South Dakota.”

Rep. Mike Stevens, R-Yankton, called for the resolution to be killed.

Stevens said “some pretty significant things that would need to occur” such as overcoming public challenges and making changes in state and federal laws.

“I think it’s premature at this point for it to be a meaningful resolution,” Stevens said.

House Minority Leader Spencer Hawley, D-Brookings, spoke against it too.

“We really have a bad history, obviously,” Hawley said. “The problem with the resolution is the open-ended of it.”

Hawley continued, “How much can you go back today and repair history that was done is the question.”

The resolution, HCR 1010, had only Bordeaux and Sen. Jim Bradford, D-Pine Ridge, as its sponsors.

**Direct Link:** [http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/resolution-to-return-much-of-black-hills-to-native-americans/article\\_66b72f3a-8152-5433-954a-e557e064a713.html](http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/resolution-to-return-much-of-black-hills-to-native-americans/article_66b72f3a-8152-5433-954a-e557e064a713.html)